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SNAPSHOT

THE DRUMS, BRITISH EMBASSY
 AUSTIN, TEXAS, 19/03/10

Drums bang
out the hits
at SXSW

The Drums heated up an unusually chilly Austin evening last week as they headlined the NME with PPL party at the year's South

By South West.

Frontman **Jonathan Pierce** and co showcased tracks from their forthcoming debut, including 'I Felt Stupid' and 'Forever And Ever Amen'. Fans had queued around the block for the Brooklyn-based quartet, and The Drums didn't disappoint; they got the sweaty crowd dancing and pumping their fists, a rare occurrence at the music industry event.

Taking place in Austin every March, SXSW sees both new and established groups descending on the Texan capital to play intimate sets to industry-insiders from across the globe.

This year's SXSW boasted a no-frills, tiny performance from Muse, Hole's first US gig in more than a decade and sets from the likes of Local Natives, The Temper Trap and The xx.

See next week's issue, out Wednesday, March 31, for a rundown of the best new talent we discovered at SXSW 2010.

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WHAT'S ON THE NME STEREO



1 HOLY FUCK Latin America

Carnivals, Caipirinhas, coffee, cocaine... Latin America hardly needs more reasons to be cool, but Holy Fuck have given the continent its new national anthem. If continents had national anthems, and pulsating synth-buggering electro-funk ones at that. You used to have to brave Chatroulette to hear this, but they've kindly posted it on penis-free blogs now. **On holyfuckmusic.com now**

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3 CULTS Go Outside

If we were the kind of people who were into creating spurious movements and scenes out of nowhere (who, us?) we'd be calling this the Summer Of Swoon or something. Oh wait, it's only the Spring Of Swoon, so far. Anyway, from the woozy doze-scapes of Memory Tapes and Toro Y Moi, to the doe-eyed puppy love of Summer Camp, if it's not twinkly innocent dream-pop shot through with suggestions of raging hormones then we don't want to know. **On NME Radio now**



2 RYAN ADAMS Electrosnake

Ruffle-haired alt.country loverboy Ryan Adams has always had a teen-metal-geek side lurking beneath that plaid shirt. Side-project Werewolf indulged it safely, but now it seems his hairy affliction is no longer restricted to once-in-a-full-moon throwaways. Ryan claims his new album 'Orion' will be his "most legit metal record ever". Going by this sexy beast, we're more in chunky hard-rock than Judas Priest territory, so fear ye not, 'Love Is Hell' devotees. **On <http://ryanada.ms/> now**

4 TEAM GHOST Colours In Time

**FREE
DOWNLOAD**

Nicolas Fromageau (that's French for 'cheesewater', right?) was a founding member of synth-scapers M83. He left shortly after their second album, so subsequently never got to enjoy the breakthrough success of the radiant 'Saturdays = Youth'. By the sound of it, though, he's too busy with his new duo creating krauty, moody, rushing electro-dreampop like this, to give much of a stuff.

On nme.com/mp3blog now



5 ROBYN Fembot

Adult pop is a tricky old game, but slightly unhinged boy-haired genius Robyn makes it looks like child's play. We've missed her since 2007's 'Robyn' – but it seems she's still ruling the school. This shunting, bleeping, animatronic taster of her new album features such characteristic lyrical genius as "I got a lot of automatic booty applications". Got to love that.

On www.robyn.com now



6 O CHILDREN Ruins

Normally 'schlock' is a derogatory word. In the hands of such fabulous creatures as London ham-goth lunatics O Children, though, it's a thing to be admired with no small degree of awe. They may have as much dark gravitas as cobweb tights, but they're massive, massive, Christopher-Lee-shape-throwing fun. Somewhere between White Lies realising how ridiculous they are, and The Damned indulging in trick or treat larks, it's wonderfully silly.

On NME Radio now



7 LONELY GALAXY Time

Being chucked is rubbish, but it doesn't half make for some great tunes. In the mode of howling-on-the-floor weepies such as Spiritualized's 'Broken Heart', this will wring you out like the soggy, tear-stained T-shirt they forgot to take when they LEFT YOU AAAAHHH. This string-heaving beauty is just one of many Harry Granger-Howell has tucked away in the dark place in his heart. On MySpace now



8 YEASAYER One (XXXChange remix)

Such is the rippling thrill that runs through Anand Wilder's voice, we should have known this track would lend itself only too well to euphoric banger treatment. Spank-rock man XXXChange ramps up a maddeningly intense and dirty hard-house beat that builds to planetary proportions. "I like it when you lose control" indeed. On nme.com/mp3blog now



9 THREE TRAPPED TIGERS 11

We like music that confuses us so much it makes our nose bleed, and math/dim/glitch/electro flibbertigibbets TTT get our claret flowing. Flipping from Fuck Buttons-style radiant atmospherics to furiously abrasive and baffling riffage, they're like eight bands in one, only not as fat as that makes them sound. They also follow the admirably austere !Forward, Russia! School of numbering songs instead of naming them. Guess what volume you should turn this one up to? On nme.com/mp3blog now



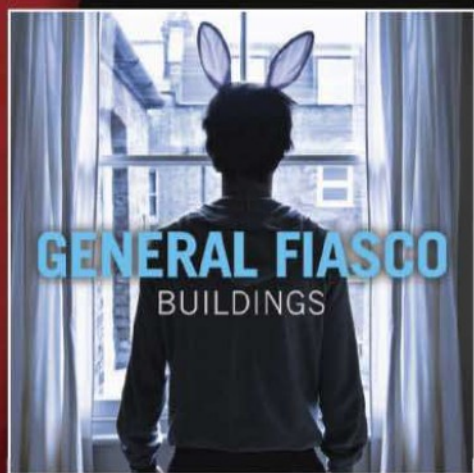
10 THE JOY FORMIDABLE Popinjay

This trio's 2008 debut revealed one of the most perfectly fully-formed UK rock bands we'd seen in quite some time. This first single from their as-yet-untitled second album adds a darker, more narcotic edge to their alt influences, polishing up that Smashing Pumpkins influence 'til it shines. You can't live on pretty blog titbits alone, you know. Sometimes you need some fat meaty riffs.

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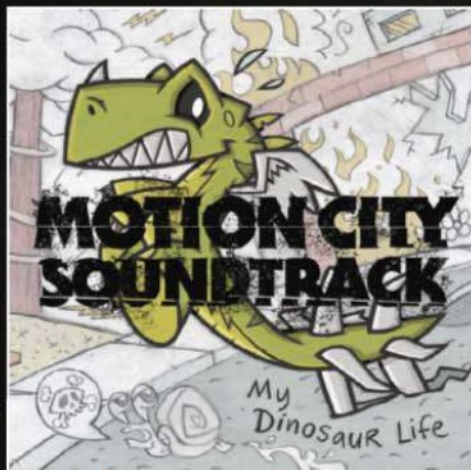


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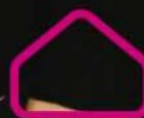
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The Big Pink stop partying, start recording

Having used their on-the-road studio as a gin palace, Robbie and Milo now hope to buckle down and get to preview some of album number two on their next UK tour

We all know **The Big Pink** like a party, but party music doesn't appear to be their forte. The band are currently in the process of planning out their second album, but admitted that their goal to have the record ready by the time they finished the Shockwaves NME Awards Tour last month was wrecked by the band just having too much of a good time on the road.

"We tried to [record on the road] but it's pretty hard," laughed **Robbie Furze** of his and **Milo Cordell's** feeble efforts to get demoing between dates. "We did try to hook up a little studio in the back of the bus, but we didn't touch it. We plugged it in once and then for the rest of the time it became a drinks holder!"

With the band kicking off another UK tour in May, the

duo explained that they have made the most of the last few weeks off the road, with at least one new song ready.

"It's called 'Love Runs Faster Than Time' and we haven't played it to anyone yet," Furze explained. "Maybe it'll be on a new album, or maybe something a bit more low-key. We haven't decided."

The guitarist said he thought the band will play the song live on their forthcoming UK dates, which start in Oxford on May 7 and also include their biggest headline show so far at London's HMV Forum on May 13. "I think we'll have some more material for the Forum show," he predicted, "and road-testing the new songs helps - I like seeing what they feel like live."

Cordell also stressed that **The Big Pink's** next album will be different from 'A Brief History Of Love', which the pair feel they were slightly rushed into recording.

"I think it's a half-decent record," he shrugged.

"There's some songs I really love on it, and maybe a couple more which I look back on and think we should have changed slightly. We had a lot of songs to choose from, and we recorded it so quickly. We had, like, three weeks in the studio, and that was it."

Cordell added that he's keen for **The Big Pink** to evolve their sound from their euphoric-tinged space-rock, with a crisper-sounding album pencilled in for 2011. "There's going to be a much more definitive sound - we're going to find our feet more," he suggested. "On the first record we were kind of thrown out of the car running. This time we can just cool down, slow down, watch what's around us and come up with something a bit more thoughtful. I love the [first] record but, if I was being mean, that's what I'd say."

7 DAYS IN MUSIC



FRIENDS REUNITED

Elbow's big I Am

MANCHESTER

By rights Elbow should be hard at work on the follow-up to the Mercury Prize-winning 'The Seldom Seen Kid'. However, rather than get cracking on their own album, Guy Garvey and Craig Potter have spent the last year producing a record for Manchester legends I Am Kloot.

"It couldn't be worse timing-wise for us to get involved, we're having our time in the sun as a band and we should be getting on with the album, but when we heard the songs we couldn't not get involved," explained Garvey. "We worked in bursts between tours and the whole experience was so joyful. John [Bramwell, frontman] is one of Britain's

most important songwriters – they really are a band's band. These songs are deeply affecting, it's really a smoky late-night record, baring its soul. We wanted to make each song sound classic."

Due to both group's live commitments, the album took 14 months to make. But Bramwell was happy to wait for the world's leading I Am Kloot experts.

"The key thing is Guy and Craig have been to more I Am Kloot gigs than anyone," said the singer. "Guy did our first album and we've wanted to work with them again since then, but tours kept getting in the way. This time we decided to do it over a longer period of time. We didn't listen in the gaps and when we came back the album was all fresh."

The album is yet to be titled but is set to be released this summer.

IT'S JACK-Z

NASHVILLE Jack White says he's recorded an "unbelievable sounding" song with Jay-Z. Although the track doesn't yet have a release date, White explained that the pair hooked up "a few weeks ago". The sometime-White Stripes declined to reveal the title, but explained: "It was incredible. I played him something that I've been kicking around for a while and he immediately came out with words for it. It's unbelievable sounding."



NME GOES TO THE SEASIDE

CAMBER SANDS UK festival season is extended this year, as we're launching a new NME Weekender on November 5-7. We're curating three stages for the event at Pontins Holiday Park in Camber Sands. To get line-up and ticket info first, sign up on NME.COM now.

WALL OF METAL

LOS ANGELES

Metallica say their 2011 trek will take on Pink Floyd's legendary stage sets. Manager Peter Mensch says the set, to be staged in 10 cities globally, will "blow your mind" and will be the metal band's "equivalent of *The Wall*". Watch out for falling bricks.



IRANIAN WRITER RELEASED

TEHRAN Following the release of Behrang Tonekaboni, an Iranian music journalist who was arrested by authorities in the republic in January without explanation, a second music journalist, Kayvan Farzin, has also been released following an Amnesty International campaign. The pair were picked up in the offices of the magazine Farhang va Ahang in Tehran.

PETE'S JAILHOUSE TALK



ALBION Pete Doherty has declared that prison works... sort of. Speaking with Graham Coxon for Instigate Debate, the Babyshambles singer explained: "It keeps you off the street, doesn't it? It works in that way. But it doesn't stop you offending. Not through rehabilitation... Prison works, because it stops you committing crime. Unless you're going to stab someone in the showers."

BRISTOL FASHION

AVON Bristol has been named the UK's most musical city. The home of trip-hop just beat Cardiff in the study, which saw the Performing Right Society (PRS) compile the birth places of its 65,000 members. See next week's issue for our take on the results.

"I'm a Wal-Mart man. I don't wear designer underwear. I don't wear underwear!"

KINGS OF LEON COMMANDO CALEB FOLLOWILL WARNS FANS NOT TO EXPECT ANY MORE FASHION TIE-INS



Quick: final Glasto tickets!

WORTHY FARM

If you haven't got tickets for this year's Glastonbury festival, there's a slim chance you might be able to score some on April 11. Organisers are putting a limited number of tickets on sale after some punters chose not to buy the ones they had on deposit. Meanwhile, Orbital, Empire Of The Sun, Billy Bragg (who is curating the Leftfield) and Mumford & Sons are all playing, while Michael Eavis has announced he wants Snoop Dogg to join the bill. Watch this space.

BRIEFING

Are plant food's legal days numbered?

DRUG DEBATE

The issue: The UK government has launched an investigation into the legal high mephedrone after the drug was linked to the deaths of two teenagers in Scunthorpe on March 15. The National Association Of Head Teachers has called for a ban, while Lord Mandelson said they will act "very speedily, very carefully" once the Advisory Council On The Misuse Of Drugs (ACMD) looks into the substance. It is on their recommendation that the so-called 'plant food' could be outlawed.

Background: Louis Wainwright, 18, and Nicholas Smith, 19, died in Scunthorpe last week after apparently taking the drug, resulting in several arrests connected to the fatalities. A study into mephedrone from the National Addiction Centre claimed that 51 per cent of users said they suffered from headaches, 43 per cent from heart palpitations, 27 per cent from nausea and 15 per cent from cold or blue fingers. The drug is already illegal in Jersey, Israel, Denmark, Norway and Sweden. The ACMD's review of the substance had been delayed after several of its members resigned over political

interference. As a result a report was not expected until later this year, but this has now been brought forward to March 29.

Key quotes: Lord Mandelson: "Now it's been associated very tragically with the deaths of these two young people, the government will be looking at this very, very speedily, very carefully and we will take any action that is needed."

David Nutt, the Independent Scientific Committee On Drugs: "The government would be advised to wait until the European Monitoring Centre For Drugs And Drug Addiction report is published, rather than rushing now to make changes to the classification system."

What next? The ACMD must decide if plant food is "capable of having harmful effect sufficient to cause a social problem". Based on their recommendations, the substance could be banned and classified under the Misuse Of Drugs Act 1971. Home Office Minister Alan Campbell has promised "immediate action" once the council report.



KELE'S SOLO PARTY

NEW CROSS ■ While his bandmate Russell Lissack has teamed up with Ash for the forthcoming UK tour, Bloc Party frontman Kele Okereke has announced a series of solo shows - to be billed simply as "Kele". The singer, who recently posed naked for *Butt* magazine, confirmed he will be playing Manchester's Parklife festival on June 12 and Ibiza Rocks on August 31. His debut solo album is due to be released later in 2010.

NATIONAL VIOLET

BROOKLYN ■ The National have announced details of their new album. The band will follow-up the acclaimed 'Boxer' with 'High Violet', released on May 10 and featuring tracks including 'Bloodbuzz Ohio', 'Lemonworld', 'Conversation 16' and 'England'. The band will play two London shows on May 5 and 6. See NME.COM for details.

JAMES BROWN STILL AT REST



ALTANTA ■ Rumours that James Brown's corpse had gone missing have been denied by the man who buried him. It was claimed that the Godfather Of Soul's body had been mysteriously moved, but funeral director CA Reid insists Brown is still at rest in South Carolina. "It would have had to have gone through us," declared the funeral home in response to the claims.

MOZ IN PICKLE WITH HIRST

SALFORD LADS CLUB

Morrissey has taken aim at Damien Hirst over his use of animals in artworks. The vegetarian and former Smith was speaking with friend and artist Linder Sterling for *Interview* magazine when he suggested Hirst, who has previously pickled sharks and cows in formaldehyde, should have his "head kept in a bag for the way he's utilised - and sold - dead animals".

BRIT GLORY: WHAT'S LIAM'S STORY?

MANCHESTER ■ Liam Gallagher has denied he was dissing brother Noel during his Brit Awards speech last month. The singer didn't mention the guitarist when he picked up a prize marking 'What's The Story) Morning Glory?' as the best Brit-winning album of the last 30 years. "I'm sick of it all being about me and Noel," he told *Stopcryingyour-heartout.com*. "I thought it was only right to mention the other lads."



"I know they still have a great career ahead"

LOUIS WALSH ON JEDWARD, WHO WERE DROPPED BY SONY AFTER JUST ONE SINGLE

STUDENT MEDIA AWARDS ARE GO

AWARDS ■ The Guardian Student Media Awards 2010 have just opened for entries. Among the categories is Digital Journalist Of The Year, which is being run in association with NME.COM. For the full list and to enter, see Guardian.co.uk/sma2010. The closing date is July 3.

Come dine with Lil

LDN

She might be contemplating a musical sabbatical, but Lily Allen has not given up on her ambitions. The singer, who recently wrapped up a set of dates with Dizzee Rascal, has set her sights on hosting a dinner party for Channel 4. "Now that I've retired I'm gonna try and get on *Come Dine With Me*," she declared on Twitter. "I'm making chicken tarragon and leek pie tonight. Yum."



MGMT's 'Congratulations' and frustrations

Duo's new album live debut in London thrills and baffles in equal measure

MGMT have made no bones about the unexpected sound of forthcoming album 'Congratulations', and last week they gave the UK a clue as to what it's going to sound like live.

Making their comeback in London last week (March 18), the duo showcased seven of the album's nine tracks to a packed audience at Heaven.

Like the new album – out April 13 – **Andrew VanWyngarden** and **Ben Goldwasser** kept their return fairly unconventional. Rumours circulated that the band were going to join 'Congratulations' co-producer **Peter 'Sonic Boom' Kember** onstage with his band Spectrum a night earlier, though the pair never made it to the Sonic Cathedral night at the Luminaire. Instead they tried to team up with a different hero for the Heaven show.

Having booked **Television Personalities** to open their gig at Heaven it was believed that the band would collaborate with frontman **Dan Treacy** (the inspiration behind new album track 'Song For Dan Treacy').

However, it was Treacy's turn to go AWOL, the singer failing to make the gig because he was apparently stuck in traffic. Instead the night became solely about the band's much flaunted change of direction, which seemed to both enthrall and baffle.

At 13 minutes, 'Siberian Breaks' is an interesting addition to the live show, while 'It's Working' and 'Flash Delirium' sound almost naked compared to the swirling keyboards of 'Oracular Spectacular' tracks that included 'Pieces Of What' and 'Time To Pretend'. The latter was even dedicated to the absent Treacy, while VanWyngarden also paid tribute to the late Alex Chilton (see right), insisting that the entire show was in his honour.

After the band left the stage, a hardcore of around 100 fans remained behind chanting for 'Kids', before booing when they failed to reappear for their formerly traditional mime-along encore.

"The joke is the new material sounds really good," fan Wybe Magermans complained on one forum. "It's just a shame MGMT have given up on it before the album has even been released." However others admired the duo's ability to surprise. "They sounded incredible, Andrew's voice was as smooth as a baby's bum, they had great energy," wrote 'Polly' on the group's official site.

Whatever the stylistic changes, MGMT are clear that 'Congratulations' was built to tour.

"This new album, we were thinking more about performing songs live while we were writing them," explained VanWyngarden. "It's hard to play 50 things at once."



Alex Chilton, 28 December
1950 – 17 March 2010



Alex Chilton RIP

A true music cult hero, the **Big Star** frontman's music had the rare ability to entertain and inspire a generation of musicians. **Pat Long** joins the tributes to a "rock'n'roll lifer"

Alex Chilton – who died aged 59 last week (March 17) following suspected heart problems – was truly one of the greats: perverse and truculent, but with an ear for melody and a way of writing classic pop songs that were so much more than just pop songs. His willingness to totally open himself up on record – check out **Big Star**'s 'Holocaust' or oddball lo-fi solo set 'Like Flies On Sherbert' – was the mark of a true artist. His knack for being around at key points in music history – hanging out with Dennis Wilson and Charles Manson in LA at the end of the '60s, playing CBGB with Talking Heads and Television in the '70s, producing the first Cramps album at the start of the '80s, mixing it with the grunge scene in the '90s – was the sign of a rock'n'roll lifer. His knowledge of blues, rock'n'roll and soul was scholastic. His influence – from REM and The Replacements to Teenage Fanclub and Nirvana – undeniable. "Alex Chilton's music was

a big part of my life and a huge influence on REM. He will live on for us through all the great music he made," explained the band's **Mike Mills**, while Teenage Fanclub's **Norman Blake** stressed how Chilton's influence still resonates: "You ask any contemporary band and they'll be aware of Big Star and Alex Chilton. It's like The Velvet Underground – the first album didn't sell a lot of records, but the people that bought it were all musicians, and all those people went out and made albums and the record became legendary," he told BBC 6 Music. "You could say a similar thing about the Big Star records."

The son of a jazz musician, Chilton first rose to prominence as singer with Memphis pop-soul act **The Box Tops**, whose first single, 1967's 'The Letter', was a global hit, establishing the 16-year-old Chilton as a teenage heartthrob with a voice that switched between old-beyond-his-years blues rasp and heartbreaking soul croon.

After four albums Chilton grew sick of singing other people's songs and moved to New York to establish a career as a coffeehouse folkie before returning to Memphis and forming Big Star in 1971.

Inspired by The Beatles at a time when it was deeply unfashionable, Big Star made direct and heartfelt pop music, full of the kind of euphoria and regret that comes with growing older. The band's first two albums had great reviews, but distribution problems meant that they never achieved more than local success, while they had to put up with playing to crowds shouting for 'The Letter' every night. Their final album, 'Third/Sister Lovers', was a Chilton solo record in everything but name – by some way one of the most depressed-sounding records ever made, it was also a haunting and totally original masterpiece. Recorded in 1974, it wasn't released until four years later, by which stage Chilton was living in New York and trying to avoid any mention of his old bands.

This was a theme that continued for much of the 1980s until, following a series of solo releases that were nothing if not perpetually compelling, problems with drink and drugs and a period washing dishes at a restaurant in New Orleans, Chilton and Big Star drummer Jody Stephens agreed to reform with members of power-pop band The Posies for a one-off gig. That gig led to a series of tours and a new album in 2005.

Famously reclusive (he once claimed that he only toured so that he could afford to take six months off every year) and dismissive of his back catalogue, it was with the reformed Box Tops that Chilton seemed most happy. Frustratingly for Big Star fans, while he was comfortable singing 'The Letter' at oldies conventions, he always talked down his songs from the mid-'70s. As Big Star's records only increase in poignancy and power as they age, it's a tragedy that Alex Chilton won't be around to see it happen.

WE WANT ANSWERS!

This week:

ROGER DALTREY
The Who

NME: Pete Townshend's said his tinnitus is so bad that The Who's Teenage Cancer Trust gig next week could be the last. Is it over?

Roger Daltrey: "I don't know what's happening. I really don't know. We're desperately trying to find new ways to work. I've done this whole tour – 11 dates with Eric Clapton – in the States working with new in-ear monitors. Just so if Pete wants to use them [at the TCT gig] I'll be used to using them."

How bad is his hearing now?

"It's a big issue. There's nothing worse than your ears ringing 24 hours a day. It's a fucking nightmare. Pete and I are agreed on this – we don't see any time that we're going to stop, but we are realistic that one day it will retire us. We'll just no longer be able to do it."

Should you have looked after your ears better in the past?

"One of the problems we have as musicians is that we're very rarely playing in places that were designed for music. We're usually playing in basketball arenas or soccer stadiums.

The whole thing is a fucking joke really, no wonder we've got hearing damage. We're having to adjust our ears to that cacophony of din, which is what it often sounds like onstage. But if the monitors work they'll give Pete another 10 years. They're tricky, though. You can't just come from one system into the other. To get used to them you have to be incredibly patient. And I don't know that Pete's going to have that patience!"

Would you carry on if Pete has to stop?

"Of course I would, yeah. I mean, I don't want to stop singing. I just can't keep going on trying to keep singing like I did 40 years ago.

I'm realistic about where I am in my life now."

Are you bricking it about your 'Quadrophenia' performance on March 30?

"Well, the last time we did it live was in 1977. So I'll let you know after the first five days of rehearsal whether it's going to be alright! I can still do it, but I can't do it night after night. This is probably the last time we'll ever do 'Quadrophenia'. In that sense, it's a historic night, I suppose."

Arctic Monkeys and Noel Gallagher are good coups for the TCT shows...

"[Arctic Monkeys] are a great band. I haven't seen them doing their new stuff.



"This is probably the last time we'll ever do 'Quadrophenia'"

I love their drummer. I love drummers and they've

got a very special drummer. Noel? It's going to be a biggie, but we always just give him free rein. Just as long as he keeps it within the budget! He's fabulous, Noel, and he's totally unconditional. A good lad."

What about newer bands?

"I tell you who I did see recently who were really interesting – The Horrors. I was really impressed with that wonderful ability to constantly reinvent the goth thing, or the new romantic thing, to the next level. Whether they're

saying the right things, I don't know – I haven't heard enough of their material – but they've definitely got something going for them."

Who is top of the list for your future TCT shows?

"I've always wanted the Stones and McCartney, but they've never been available, they're asked to do charities all the time. There's always a door open."

You're TCT's patron, so how are you going to prepare for the shows?

"No matter how hard it gets, it isn't ever going to be harder than it is for a teenager going through cancer stuck on a children's ward. That's my mentality with this thing."

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NEW TO THE PLAYLIST...

Who will be fighting it out in future charts?

NME TRACK OF THE WEEK...



DUM DUM GIRLS - 'YOURS ALONE'

"With the sun peeking through the cloud curtains every now and again, Dum Dum Girls' debut album 'I Will Be' drops with impeccable timing. Bringing with it 11 two-minute sun-damaged, fuzz-ridden ditties it's the slacker sound of southern California. So why did NME Radio choose to add album track 'Yours Alone' over the single? Because they can. And because it thumps along on toy-like drums and high rollers of feedback and boasts extra lo-fi guitar from Yeah Yeah Yeahs' Nick Zinner."

**Tim Chester, Assistant
Editor, NME.COM**



DOVES - 'BLUE WATER'

"New best-of 'The Places Between' gives us an excuse to exhume this live fave. Full of haunting vocals and solid drums it's as if the song itself is bursting out of the vaults."

Abby Tayleure, Writer, NME



THE FALL - 'BURY'

"A typically caustic offering from the Manchester legends' 28th studio album. Mark E Smith's clearly not mellowing with age."

**Marc McLaren,
Production Editor**



BLACK REBEL MOTORCYCLE CLUB - 'EVOL/MAMA TAUGHT ME BETTER'

"The slow-burn stoner groove of 'Evol' or the more motorik 'Mama...'? We couldn't choose, so we chucked them both on."

Alex Petrovic, Writer, NME



MGMT - 'FLASH DELIRIUM'

"Riding that 13th Floor Elevator all the way into the sky while Bowie pushes the buttons, Andrew and Ben still confound expectations."

**Emily Mackay, Reviews
Editor**

THIS WEEK'S TOP 20

THE NME CHART

- 1 **TINIE TEMPAH**
'PASS OUT'
Parlophone
- 2 **MUMFORD & SONS**
'THE CAVE'
Island
- 3 **FLORENCE AND THE MACHINE**
'DOG DAYS ARE OVER'
Parlophone
- 4 **PLAN B**
'STAY TOO LONG'
679
- 5 **GORILLAZ**
'STYLO'
EMI
- 6 **BIFFY CLYRO**
'MANY OF HORROR'
14th Floor
- 7 **NEW LAURA MARLING**
'DEVIL'S SPOKE'
Virgin
- 8 **THE COURTEENERS**
'YOU OVERDID IT DOLL'
A&M
- 9 **DELPHIC**
'HALCYON'
Polydor
- 10 **MUSE**
'RESISTANCE'
Helium 3/Warner Bros
- 11 **NEW AUDIO BULLYS**
'ONLY MAN'
Cooking Vinyl
- 12 **JAMIE T**
'EMILY'S HEART'
Virgin
- 13 **VAMPIRE WEEKEND**
'GIVING UP THE WEEKEND'
XL Recordings
- 14 **BAND OF SKULLS**
'I KNOW WHAT I AM'
You Are Here
- 15 **MAJOR LAZER**
'PON DE FLOOR'
Cooperative Music/V2
- 16 **GIGGS FEATURING BOB**
'DON'T GO THERE'
XL Recordings
- 17 **TWO DOOR CINEMA CLUB**
'UNDERCOVER MARTYN'
Cooperative Music/V2
- 18 **YEASAYER**
'ONE'
Mute
- 19 **KASABIAN**
'VLAD THE IMPALER'
Columbia
- 20 **FRIENDLY FIRES**
'HOLD ON'
XL Recordings



TINIE TEMPAH

You've heard it on every radio, car stereo and night bus sound system from Dover to Dundee. Unsurprisingly it stays at the top for a second week.



LAURA MARLING

Ms Marling's folk crusade continues as she enters the Top 20 at Number 7. Watch exclusive live performances at **NME.COM/video** now.



AUDIO BULLYS

Audio Bullys hope to lay the ghost of 'Shot You Down' to rest with their first release in half a decade. It makes our second highest new entry at Number 11.

The NME Chart is compiled on a weekly basis from the sales of physical and digital singles through traditional high street retailers, internet retailers and digital music service providers. Singles are eligible for the NME Chart if they have featured on the playlists of NME Radio or TV, or in NME Magazine.

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MY MUSIC

PROBING THE EARS OF...

Blood Red Shoes



Right now I'm loving...

'BLACK RICE' WOMEN



Laura-Mary Carter (guitars/vocals): "I first heard it round my friend Dan's house - we were doing our album artwork."

I thought it was really cool, so I bought the album, and this song is one I keep playing over and over again. It makes me want to try out new instruments - it's not like the normal music I listen to, it's not heavy guitar. It's got tambourine and glockenspiels and stuff on it - it's kind of messy, but in a really good way."

My first record...

'BAD' MICHAEL JACKSON



Steven: "I fucking loved it when I was about nine. I remember saving up pocket money and birthday money. I bought it on cassette from Woolworths in Horsham, the town I grew up in. I used to like 'Smooth Criminal' - that was the one I used to sing along to the most when I was little. I still like it now because it's amazingly written pop music - it's really hard to dislike it - it's just fucking good!"

A record by a hero...

'TO MOTHER' BABES IN TOYLAND



Laura-Mary: "My hero is Kat Bjelland from Babes in Toyland. I think I heard about them through Nirvana and Hole and this is the record I first found of theirs. I became a massive fan and I'm completely in awe of Kat Bjelland and her guitar playing. It's the reason I picked up a guitar - she's a massive influence on me. I used to go to all the gigs I could possibly go to, like a crazy fan. She had another band called Katastrophe Wife and I used to go and see them quite a lot as well."

You must hear...

Q AND NOT U



Steven Ansell (drums/vocals): "They've had such a huge influence. You know that Velvet Underground thing, where loads of people didn't hear them, but the people who did were all in bands? Q And Not U had that. The first thing I thought when I heard Klaxons was, 'That is the most blatant Q And Not U rip-off I've ever heard.' Foals sound hugely like them. We met We Are Scientists once, and they were like, 'We fucking love Q And Not U - why has no-one ever heard of them?'"

A tearjerker...

'SOON' MY BLOODY VALENTINE



Laura-Mary: "It reminds me of friends that I don't see any more. It's one of the more upbeat ones on 'Loveless'. I wanted to see them at Bestival [in 2008] but as I was leaving Brighton there was a really bad storm and a tree fell on the track, there were no trains and I missed it, but then I got to see them when we played a festival in Belgium. It was insanely loud - loads of people kept going out to be sick."

I wish I'd written...

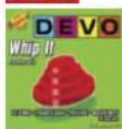
'FUNNEL OF LOVE' WANDA JACKSON



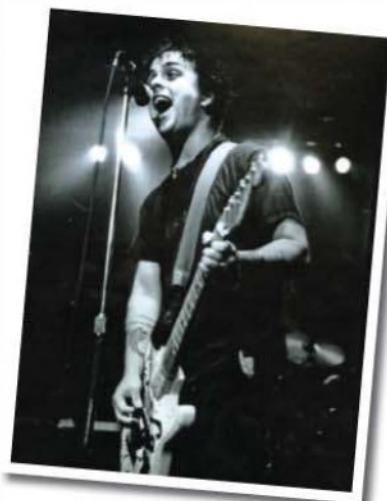
Laura-Mary: "It's one of my favourite tracks. I heard it through a friend who introduced me to Wanda Jackson, and that's the one that I really love. It's got such a cool atmosphere to it - it's got those spooky backing vocals. It's brilliant, her voice is amazing. She played in London twice not that long ago and I missed her, and apparently she's playing again, but I think I'm on tour again so I can't see her. Apparently, she's a Bible basher now, though, and sings about God."

To make me dance...

'WHIP IT' DEVO



Steven: "It's a totally oddball disco song. I'm really, really into the first album, 'Q: Are We Not Men? A: We Are Devo' - the Brian Eno stuff. Some of the later stuff gets more cheesy, but the first record's really cool and it's got some amazing sounds on it. The whole way they presented themselves was ahead of its time and clever, but not pompous, because they were taking the piss as well as saying something quite smart."



My first gig

GREEN DAY, BRIXTON ACADEMY, LONDON, 1998

Steven: "I was about 13. I got the train and went to Brixton with my then-girlfriend who had dyed pink hair. We didn't really tell our parents where we'd gone. We went right to the front and got completely squashed by loads of big punks. There was one song where they got a kid out of the audience to jam with the band. I remember screaming my lungs out, trying to get up, because I'd just learnt a few guitar chords and I knew how to play that song."

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LETTERS

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Letter of the week

Nashing of teeth

Dear Kate Nash, while it's always nice to see a young feminist firebrand sticking it to The Man (*NME*, March 13) I can't help but notice that you seem to have borrowed most of your opinions from a certain Wakefield-based trio/quartet. This is all well and good, but your recent self-righteous riot grrrl shtick seems a little embarrassing when it's all been 'cribbed' from elsewhere. Despite your protestations of undying love, I'm struggling to find the Bikini Kill/Hole/Pixies touchstones in your first record. There do, however, seem to be a lot of references to your fella's mates being fitter and having lots of cups of tea. I do agree with you on one thing, though: it really is annoying when people pretend to be something that they're not.

Daniel Hailstone, Nottingham

Nah, have you heard 'I Just Love You More'? Proper angry she is on that. She goes 'Woooo!', and 'Rooooaaar!'. Righteous fury has a name, and that name is Kate 'Gosh I'm not happy about reality TV and stuff, yeah?' Nash – MR

Has Kate Nash lost it? In *NME* Kate says, "Music for me is about sticking it to The Man, not shaking hands with him." Er, aren't you on a major label, Kate? Haven't you shaken hands with The Man quite a bit? Next she talks about 'false' images: "They invent a bunch of pretty little girls to do something alternative and build up their little indie careers even though they've been signed to a major the whole time." Er, not like when you released your debut 'alternative' single 'Caroline's A Victim' on Moshi Moshi records before releasing 'Foundations' on a major then, Kate? OK, she's been there, done that and admits she was mistaken. However, actions speak louder than words and if Kate really wants to stick it to The Man, she needs to get off her major and put out her screaming, expletive-laden songs like 'Mansion Song' on her own little DIY label. While she's releasing great pop gems like 'Do Wah Doo', with its sexy surfy guitar and '60s harmonies

through a huge corporation, she comes across as selling a false image herself.
Rob, Portsmouth

It's actually quite unnerving the way she's suddenly convinced herself that she's Corin Tucker. I wish she'd decided she was Angela Lansbury instead. That would have been equally silly, but at least she may have solved a few crimes – MR

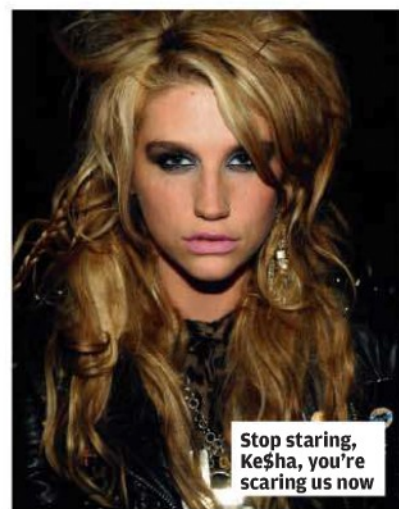
VIRGINS AND BITCHES

Hello, I'm currently popping my *NME* Letters virginity here, so be gentle... I've never had the desire to write in before, mainly because I'm lazy, but I must say I thought Peter Robinson's article about the 'fucking feisty' Kesha (and yes I'm not putting a dollar sign, because I think it's 'fucking stupid') was brilliant (*NME*, March 13)! It showed her up in a way I could only have dreamed about, and I'm delighted that *NME* didn't lick her arse or play up to her (cough) crazy image as most fraud music publications would. She was shown up as the non-entity that most of these pre-meditated, fake and pointless acts are and, for that, *NME*, I salute you! "Brush my teeth with a bottle of Jack"...fuck off!
John Armstrong, via email

Am writing to give kudos to your *Versus* session with Ke\$ha. Thank you for being the first to put that moronic little twat in her place! She is a skid-mark on the current music scene and one of the prime examples of what is wrong with the mainstream. That is all.

Craig, Swansea

OK, well that's the misogynistic part of Letters over with. Let's move on to geeks and other stuff... – MR



STALKERS

It can't be illegal if it's love... right?



MARC, GLASGOW

"Here's a picture of me hanging out with La Roux at the Shockwaves NME Awards aftershow party"



JEN, VIA EMAIL

"Here's my friend and I with Matt Bellamy from Muse at the airport. He was so bloody nice it isn't funny. We met Dom and Chris too"



SUPER EVIL JO, VIA EMAIL

"Me and Steven from Blood Red Shoes at their Manchester gig"

EQUINE LOVE AFFAIR

So once upon a time I loved Foals. However, I hadn't really listened to them in a while other than the occasional 'Cassius' blast or when they were on NME Radio. Basically, they fell off my radar. However, the sheer brilliance of 'Spanish Sahara' has blasted Foals back into my life and I have been listening to that, as well as 'Antidotes', furiously all week and I'm so ecstatically excited I can't even explain it. I have no doubt 'Total Life Forever' will be one of the best albums of 2010 if not the best, and 'Antidotes' has crept back into my 'top 10 albums of the decade' list. I can't wait to see them live in May. 'Til then, let's fly balloons on this fuel called love.

Adam Skirving, Glasgow.

I've heard the new album and it's a real treat, I can tell you. Not so much

math-rock as trigonometry-rock. Hmm, that phrase means nothing. No wonder I got this job – MR

FREAKING OUT AT THE MOVIES

I'm not even going to hide how happy I was to see Two Door Cinema Club in last week's NME (March 13)! They deserve so much right now, and are actually such an amazing band! I was a little put off by Gorillaz on the cover but as soon as I read the interview I swear a little wee came out. WELL DONE, TWO DOOR CINEMA CLUB! Thanks, NME. I normally want to punch holes in the issues every week, but this put me on cloud nine – for a change you got it right. Also, the prick in Letters who said The xx were shit can suck my dick.

Molly Collins, via email

Um, thanks Molly. But please take care that the magazine's not on your lap the next time you punch it; hurts the ol' cock, that does – MR

NEW MUSIC IS MY RADAR

The other night I was exposed to the two sides of your Radar section in one gig. First up was the aptly monikered Yuck, who inflicted the blandest, schmindest, faux-emotive, unimaginative tripe I've suffered since The Enemy figured out their third chord. Where James McMahon dreamed up his Dinosaur Jr./Sonic Youth comparisons from (NME, February 13), I don't know. However, the gig was saved by the ace Egyptian Hip Hop, a genre-kicking band with ideas to spare and influences in all the right places. The moral of my rant is that I'll suffer shit bands at gigs to get to good ones if I have to. All I ask is they don't register on your Radar. Cheers.

Georgie Boy, West Yorkshire

Well, if our Radar section drew you to just one amazing band then it's doing its job. Also, you're wrong about Yuck. I'm with James on this one, grunge is back, and it's even had a wash – MR

DODGY MANAGEMENT?

After listening to the new MGMT track 'Flash Delirium', I must say how impressed I am. Although they said that 'Congratulations' isn't going to be an 'Oracular Spectacular' 2.0, it pretty much sounds like it and I don't feel this is a bad thing. This song in particular made me proud to be an MGMT fan. Not written to adhere to chart buyers' taste, this proves that even after the huge commercial success of 'Kids' and 'Time To Pretend', MGMT have not let



it go to their heads and have stuck to their roots (poor 'The Handshake' reference), doing what they do best. Push aside all the positives and we are left with one problem: MGMT are crap live. I once saw Nickelback (I know, I'm sorry, the tickets were free) and I can honestly say that they were 15 times better than MGMT and... (SNIP! –Ed)

Sarah Sahim

Jesus Sarah, I was with you there, and then you thuggishly rammed the image of Chad Kroeger back into my mind. He looks like a sad horse at a Chuck Norris convention. At the gig, did you buy a T-shirt with his hapless face on it, Sarah? Did you? DID YOU? – MR

SEND US YOUR LETTERS

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AND ANOTHER THING...

In case you've still not made your point

BUZZ OFF

Can you shed some light on what The Bees are up to?

ANDREW, VIA EMAIL

They've opened a small family butchers in Nuneaton. Free tears with every pork chop – MR

CURRYING FAVOUR

When are Bombay Bicycle Club getting a cover story?!

ADAM SKIRVING, GLASGOW

Just as soon as our curry's arrived – MR

NOT A-MUSED

In the Gorillaz issue I saw a letter that made me laugh. A person called Ren ranted on about how he is pissed off by Muse. I am a Muse fanatic (you probs hate us but carry on) but saying they're totally rubbish is out of order. They have become a WORLD phenomenon and released (not their best) a pretty decent album.

BEN, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

High praise indeed for that album, and that's from a Muse fanatic! For the record, I like Muse fans. World Of Warcraft, virginity, capes, all that; lovely stuff, keep it up – MR

ANIMAL RE-IGNITE

As much as it hurts to see bands reforming to cash in, I'm looking forward to seeing Suede tour this year. For those of us who were mere sprogs when Suede burst onto the scene in the '90s, let's hope that fane old and new can experience the importance of a truly great live band.

ALEX MILLER, VIA EMAIL

Now you're talking. Can't wait to pretend I'm gay so I can snog girls again. Not that it ever worked before. I did make a biker friend called Todd though. His cuddles were rough... – MR

LIBRARIES = SEXY

The other Donovan started on Neighbours in 1986 replacing Darius Perkins who played Scott in the first year of the series. He has gone on to do other stuff but I can't be arsed to look them up.

TIM HARRIS, BRUNEL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Tim once ate a snooker ball. True fact – MR

DECKS AND PLUGS AND ROCK'N'ROLL

Forget loud guitars and chiselled cheekbones... all you need to make yourself a superstar are turntables, a bulging bag of vinyl and a Dell Studio 15 laptop...

We've all been there. You're down your local indie disco, it's 1am, the snakebite's kicking in and you'd really quite like to hear that mammoth Foals/Arctics/Muse track NOW please. Only problem is, will the DJ listen?

Will he heck. However many times you request the tune, however many drinks you buy them, no matter how much shameless pleading and flashing of teeth, they refuse to play the track.

this and two pairs of cans to bring a room to fever pitch. The dual jack also means you can listen to tunes on the train, at home, school or work with a friend, and watch Blu-Ray films together. It's a sexy piece of kit too, with a choice of colours and designs and it also features high-speed Bluetooth and WiFi options, so you'll never be far from your Facebook or Twitter accounts.

If you want to Sack The DJ with Dell you need to get yourselves to www.nme.com/dellsackthedj. There you can submit your own perfect playlist –

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Well there's two ways round this late-night agony. You could A) rip out their headphones, bind them in Sellotape and hijack the decks, playing them your records until they're educated or B) you could enter Dell's Sack The DJ competition, which is allowing a handful of lucky readers the chance to fly – all expenses – with a mate to Club NMEs around the globe to become a superstar DJ themselves for the night.

The Dell Studio 15 laptop is bringing music to life by whisking some discerning music fans to the world's biggest club nights to, in the words of Morrissey, hang the DJ, and play their own tunes to packed rooms. The Studio 15 laptop would be a good addition for any DJ; not only does it pack in one of the fastest and smartest processors on the planet, delivering extra performance when you need it, it also boasts a massive hi-def 15.6" widescreen, a backlit keyboard for selecting songs in gloomy clubs and two headphone jacks. Justice or Daft Punk would only need

those 10 tracks that not only represent your musical taste but can hold a room full of clubbers captivated. You'll need some indie, some rock, maybe some hi-NRG dance or dubstep, perhaps a little surprise from the vaults – just make sure your set stands out and would go down well.

Once your setlist is up, friends, family, neighbours, lovers and strangers can vote for you. The people with the most popular Dell playlists will win a trip for them and their friend to jet to a Club NME across the world to play their set out live with NME Radio's DJ James Theaker, a man pretty used to starting the party across the globe already. PLUS, they'll get their hands on a coveted Dell Studio 15 laptop to boot!

James will be following the competition, so tune into his show, NME Modified, 8-10pm every Saturday, to hear the best tracks from your playlists. Listen at NME.COM/radio, DAB, Sky Channel 0184, Virgin Media 975 or Freesat 727 now.



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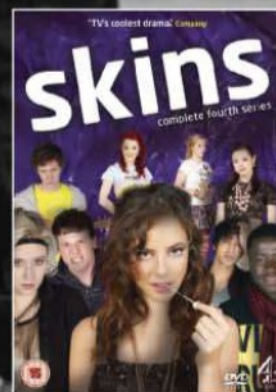


I say what I mean, and I do what I say.

Al Pacino as Lt. Vincent Hanna
Heat (1995)

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NME LOVES

From the folks that brought you The Smiths, The Strokes and The Libertines, finally, it's...

WILDER

It's three hours until Wilder play their big London show for Huw Stephens' night at The Social. Their first in the capital. If they seem a little cowed in our presence, a little wide-eyed, a little given to saying things like, 'Our music comes from combining our different influences', it could be because this is their first-ever interview.

Lead *Radar* page in *NME* isn't a bad start to their press career, but then Wilder are already one of those little music biz secrets. They formed barely a year ago. They built up a fanbase playing small club shows in their native Bristol, shunning London and deliberately limiting their online presence (no MySpace, no blogs, no site). It worked. Before too long, the whole A&R fraternity had zoomed up the A4, rolls of cash in hand, salivating after their signatures. Rough Trade won. Rough Trade tends to win in these kinds of situations. When they decide to put out something that's straightforward i-n-d-i-e, they come up trumps: Smiths, Strokes, Libertines... Wilder? Maybe. The band are buying it. "Geoff Travis said the same thing to us he said to The Libertines," drummer Bec coos. "Keep working hard. You're talented..."

The people who comprise Wilder are as follows. Jay - in charge of keys and almost overbearingly good-looking. Sam - the songwriting leading light, in charge of having wispy early-20s facial hair, guitar and singing with a slightly emo creaminess to his voice. Joe - who also does the stupidly good-looking thing, while lending back-up on bass. Bec - the girl-drummer, reprising the roles of hoodie-wearing, liking cars (in that slightly unnerving *Top Gear* way), and having what she claims is 'audio dyslexia' - the inability to decipher what you're saying unless she can see your lips move. The three boys were all smalltown emigres to Bristol from Devon and Cornwall. They all stumbled upon Bristol merely because it's the nearest big city you hit if you're travelling from the southwest. But things only really fell into place with the addition of Bec. She came from Tesco.

Bec: "I was looking at vegetables."

Sam: "I just went up to her in the shop and asked her if she wanted to play with us. She seemed to fit."

The four went on to melange together pretty much every electro-rock touchpoint you could list. 'Girls Vs Boys', for instance, thrums like a less sucky Delphic, then duly ticks the boxes of post-punk, layers on the hyper-emotive Klaxons vox, before plinking out via some Foalsian high-plucking. 'TBT' dons the bejewelled electro-glam boots of CSS doing The Sweet's 'Blockbuster', then accelerates towards frazzled Datarock. Yes, Datarock. You got a problem with that?

You don't know them yet. You will soon enough. "I think a lot of people have heard the name," Jay butts in, "but they haven't necessarily heard the, uh, game." He pauses, contemplates what he has just said. "Sorry. That was terrible. Edit that bit out." Sure thing, Jay. Sure thing. And welcome to the brave new world of interviews... **Gavin Haynes**

RADAR

FINDING THE BEST NEW MUSIC Edited by Jaimie Hodgson



NEED TO KNOW...

What: Purest distilled indie-pop aimed straight at your bedroom wall
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RADAR

OTHER STUFF YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

DIY HEROES

Legendary NY journo Gavin McInness' hot tip

CEREBRAL BALLZY

There's still homicide on the streets of the Big Apple, but now it's in East New York where all the junkies, murderers and scumbags from the old Times Square now reside. Amidst this disgusting part of town, a skateboarding group of punks have emerged and started a band that has single-handedly saved hardcore. These aren't college kids who think 'slums got soul'. These kids were born and raised in New York's gutter and instead of crying about it, Cerebral Ballzy explode onstage screaming about puking and breaking stuff. They play in the back of pizza joints, sounding like Bad Brains doing drunk Black Flag covers. As Rick Rubin trips over himself to sign them, the

band prefers to sip alcoholic Slushees, scope for "slunx" (slut punks) and head up to Canada for a tour consisting of one date in a garage. I booked them for a show I put on in Texas and they showed up an hour late, because they'd got started on by rednecks and spent the night in hospital. The bassist's eye was still swollen shut but he was laughing and drinking a beer. "You guys are the opposite of 'youth is wasted on the young,'" I told him. "Yeah," he said, "I love getting wasted." **Gavin McInness**

NEED TO KNOW...

For fans of: **Fucked Up, Black Flag, Bad Brains**
Download: **'Your Idol'** from the Radar blog



UNDERGROUND UPRISING

Haunted LA post-pop from a lass with issues

GLASSER

An original LA new-waver, and a member of the Blue Man Group have mated. What happened next? The audaciously fragile post-pop of Glasser.

Cameron Mesirow doesn't know Corey Haim's just died. When I tell her, her voice breaks – not with sorrow, but with a real, treacherous excitement that a tear's been made in the fabric of the world, even if it's as minor a rip as the death of a faded actor.

Mesirow's music begs for tearing – the threat's always there. It's pretty and pure; like an empty art gallery or the crystal surfaces of Steve Reich, but, paired with his and Arthur Russell's hollow, itchy-delirium, tracks like 'Apply' and 'Glad' feel as if they're waiting for

something to be imposed upon them. Emotionally blank canvases. Mesirow finds an "ecstatic feeling" in surrendering to the colour white, air travel and sleep paralysis.

"I love those chance moods," she says. "Have you ever been in a car accident?"

No.

"You're lucky. I can still remember my friend screaming in this car accident in high school. She made this involuntary noise and I don't know... I just sort of got off on it." **Kev Kharas**

NEED TO KNOW...

For fans of: **Bjork, Marina And The Diamonds, Kate Bush**

Download: **'C-Thru'** from the Radar blog now



CLUB BANGER

A cool reprieve from bass-smothered dancefloors

GRUM

Thanks to the boundary shunting and critical theorising of dubstep, electronic music seems kinda serious right now. What about those who just want to get drunk and procreate – don't they deserve a soundtrack too?

Edinburgh-born Graeme Shepherd, aka Grum, thinks so. His peaktime electro marries the '80s primary palette of Stuart Price to the distortion of Justice via a dollop of French filter house, just to keep things cool, y'know? His single 'Heartbeats', with its 'In My Arms'-recalling vocal sample, fills the Mylo-shaped gap for mainstream-humping yet credible records, appealing to hipsters as much as your local 2-4-1 cocktails crowd. This defiantly anti-snob approach stems from

his musical awakening. "I started getting into music in my teens, I was into the old trance stuff which is a bit embarrassing!" Still, it hasn't hindered his blog popularity, with his remixes for the likes of Lady Gaga and Goldfrapp frequently commandeering Hype Machine's top spots. "It's nice being on these lists but it's not all I want, I want to get as far as I can." Which is probably pretty far. Sure, it's hardly intellectual, but who wants that on a Saturday night? **Louise Brailey**

NEED TO KNOW...

What: **Mylo, Les Rhythmes Digitales, Justice**
Download: **Exclusive Grum mix** from the Radar blog

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QUIET

"I REALLY DON'T CARE
IF PEOPLE THINK WE'RE
AUTHENTIC OR NOT. WE'LL
FUCKING DO WHAT WE LOVE"

MARCUS MUMFORD



Mumford & Sons have spearheaded a revolution that values the banjo over the electric guitar. **Barry Nicolson** straps on his accordion and asks... how did *that* happen?

N

ME walks through the dressing room door of the O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire to be greeted by four road-fried young men in varying states of rumpled disarray; eyes are puffy from lack of sleep; clothes are creased and over-worn; facial hair has grown unchecked until the tips take on an odd ginger glisten in the mid-afternoon sun. It's a little after half past three, which means it's not late enough to start drinking, but it's

frustratingly close. There's no outward indication that today has been more or less hectic and frenzied than the day before (or the day before that, or the day before that); this state of permanent transience is now simply routine for Mumford & Sons, who look less like the vanguard of a nu-folk explosion and more like four guys in need of a sleep on something without wheels and a meal that doesn't come pre-packaged from a service station fridge.

We hook up with them 11 days into their current UK tour, but that's nothing; in the last three months alone they've played dates in India, Australia, America, Canada and Europe. For most bands it would be a case of here endeth the tether, but not for Mumford & Sons; by all accounts, keeping them off the road is the trickiest part.

"It's quite nice for us to be busy and just plough on with doing what we know how to do," says frontman Marcus Mumford as he wipes a crumb of unidentified sustenance from the corner of his mouth. "We don't know how to do radio, we don't know how to do record sales, we just know how to play gigs. Our focus has got to be on the live stuff, really. That's where we feel like we can earn whatever comes our way, that's where we feel like we can solidify our reputation. So that's what we focus on. We're focused on it just now, and we're going to be focused on it for the next six months or so, because it's just gigs and gigs and gigs."

There's a good reason for this eternal wanderlust; pausing too long in one place might necessitate a stock-take of everything that's happened to them in the last six months, something that Mumford describes as "too scary to contemplate".

Well, if he won't do it, allow us to instead. From humble west London beginnings, Mumford & Sons – comprising Marcus, double bassist Ted Dwane, organist Ben Lovett and banjoist (yes, banjoist) Winston 'Country' Marshall – have sold 350,000 copies of their debut album 'Sigh No More' in the UK alone. The tour they're currently on is completely sold out, with every date having to be upgraded to a larger venue to meet demand for tickets. Further afield, they've knocked Susan Boyle from the top of the



**Mumford & Sons (l-r):
Winston, Ted, Marcus, Ben**

Australian album charts and a recent gig in LA was attended by the likes of Jake Gyllenhaal and Benicio Del Toro. Amazingly, they've managed to do all of this while sounding like they predate electricity; an old-time Americana string band who had the misfortune to be born on the wrong side of both the Atlantic Ocean and the 19th century.

Yet they – along with friends and contemporaries Laura Marling and Noah And The Whale – have become figureheads for a new wave of folk music, one that harks back to the weighty and honourable traditions of the form. Their eldest member (Ted) may be all of 25, but their music is weathered and wizened, old as them there hills. Which begs the question of how these four young Londoners ended up sounding as they do. We mean, shouldn't they be listening to dubstep or something?

For a man who owns a tassled shirt and has worn it



**Laura Marling aged
about three, at Bosuns
with Mumford's Winston**

without irony, one of the more exciting aspects of Mumford & Sons' rise to prominence is that it should help to debunk the popular myth of country and bluegrass music being the sole preserve of Deep South inbreeders with a gun on each of their three thumbs. Britain has always been largely ignorant of the importance of country music, the music of suffering, sorrow and redemption, which is almost as influential to rock'n'roll as the blues. Changing that attitude may prove to be Mumford & Sons' biggest achievement.

"The thing is," says Marcus, "it's a wonderful platform for melodies. Of all the country bands I love, it's the melodies that I love the most about them. If you listen to a Gillian Welch album or an Alison Krauss album, the melodies on it are just mindblowing. And the instrumentation that's involved in it, it really gives a voice to those melodies and harmonies. To me it's very pure and to-the-point. But if you listen to the intricacies around it, some of the playing, some of the musicianship... like, we're all big fans of jazz music and grew up playing it, and the musicianship in that sometimes just makes you marvel, and it's the same with, for example, a really brilliant mandolin player."

But what drew you to that sort of music in the first place, when most other kids your age were obsessing over The Strokes and weeping over The Libertines? "I guess we were all into it from quite a young age," he explains. "I got into it just as I was leaving school. Then I went to America on my gap year and gradually got into it more and more. When Winnie started teaching himself the banjo... how old were you again?"

"I was 17."

"Yeah, so he was 17. And I guess we all just got into it in different ways, and met when we had the suitable



**Onstage at the O2
Shepherds Bush Empire,
March 14, 2010**

instruments in our hands. Winnie had been learning the banjo. Ted bought himself a double bass. I was trying out things on the harmonica, as everybody who starts playing folk music does! And when we sat down together, with Ben's keyboards and organ sounds, we just really liked that combination sonically. Then about a year later, I listened to a Kinks album and realised that, actually, we weren't all that original and that it had all been done before."

That it had all been done before hardly mattered; then, as now, the joy for Mumford & Sons lay in live performance. Years before the band would actually form, it was Winston who provided them with a stage to play on in the shape of Bosun's Locker, a venue-cum-underage drinking den in Fulham he ran as a 17-year-old that has since passed into legend as the place where Laura Marling and Noah And The Whale first cut their songwriting chops.

"We never actually played there as a band," says Winston, a serious-looking 22-year-old who takes exception to being mistaken for a ukulelist. "It was where we would just meet up and jam. It wasn't a 'band' thing – it was only towards the end of it that bands started to form. What it basically boils down to is that a lot of us were underage and it was the only place where we could drink. We were all either 16 or 17 at the time, except for Laura – she was only 11! Anyone who wanted to play could just get up and do it."

"It was really accidental," adds Ben. "Not to mention ramshackle. Nobody had any motive other than to get pissed and have a great time. It was all about listening to and playing music. If you weren't doing one, you were doing the other. The only qualifier to be in there was that you had to be willing to engage in some way."

Mumford & Sons hate the word 'scene' and, in truth, it's a little disingenuous to describe the Bosun's Locker bands as such: for one thing, they didn't actually form until years after the Locker's doors had slammed shut for the final time. For another, while Marcus is currently dating Laura Marling and rates Noah And The Whale (whose second album was inspired by frontman Charlie Fink's break-up with Marling) as "one of the most inspiring bands around," he also admits that, "To be honest, we don't see each other a lot. We haven't seen each other in years actually. Everyone has this idea that we all hold hands and skip around London together when we're off tour, but it's just not like that."

Still, this 'musical friend-circle' (as Winston prefers to call it) does have certain scene-like qualities. In a way, it's oddly reminiscent of the Laurel Canyon community of the late '60s and early '70s, a folksy Hollywood Hills commune of friends, lovers and rivals that included the likes of Joni Mitchell, Jackson Browne and Crosby, Stills & Nash. Like Mumford & Sons, they too were steeped in harmonious Americana and confessional folk troupes, and met with unexpectedly huge commercial success. Unlike Mumford & Sons, however, we don't recall – as a recent *Drowned In Sound* review that completely missed the point did – any sniffy critics ever dismissing them as "being to folk what Nickelback are to grunge."

We get about three words into that quote before Marcus interrupts us.

"Please let's not finish that sentence," he asks. "The last time someone quoted that line to me... well, let's just say that it spiralled into a very bad day."

While 'Sigh No More' – which was recorded with Coldplay and Maccabees producer Markus Dravs before the band had even signed their record deal – was met with wide acclaim, there were a few dissenting voices, and the issue that really seemed problematic was the one of 'authenticity'. This is a problematic concept, because it raises the question of what actually is authentic anymore. We all live in the 21st century, after all; even Jack White owns an iPod. Mumford & Sons may use traditional instruments to sing songs about faith, love and death, but there's no law that says they need to have lost limbs in the Civil War to mean them. And as far as any conspiracy theories about cynically tailoring their sound for mainstream consumption go... dude, they employ a banjo player. And, in the words of that banjo player, "People are giving us way too much credit for being more calculated than we actually are."

This is a touchy issue for Mumford & Sons, and one

they visibly don't enjoy talking about.

Says Marcus: "People can say what they want. That idea must occur from people thinking that we were just sitting around one day and decided, 'OK, we should play the banjo or the double bass because we want to sound like this', as though there was some sort of premeditated sound that we wanted to create, or recreate. But it really wasn't. Like everything that's happened to us in the last couple of years, it's all a massive accident. People must think we're very tactical about things, when it was literally like... I had an acoustic guitar in my hands. Winnie had a banjo in his. Ted had just bought a double bass, and Ben brought in a keyboard. Then we just sat down and played through some songs that we'd written. But, I mean, I can't really claim that I care all that much if someone thinks what we do is authentic or not. Come and see a show, and if you don't like it then ignore it. I just like playing gigs. I like standing next to my three best friends onstage, singing our hearts out and sweating our balls off. I don't care if someone thinks it's inauthentic. We'll fucking do what we love."

Somehow, doing what they love has managed to strike a chord with an audience far greater than they could ever have imagined. But Mumford & Sons haven't just sold an eyebrow-raising amount of albums; they've influenced the way people are dressing (seriously, next gig you go to, keep an eye out for the ever-growing waistcoat and corduroy folk brigade) and, perhaps most excitingly, the instruments people are buying – sales of traditional instruments such as banjos, double basses and even fiddles are soaring. Typically, when we suggest their complicity in this to them, they look at us like we've just sprouted antlers.

"Cultural impact?" scoffs Marcus. "I think it's cool that people are buying those kinds of instruments, but I don't think we can claim too much credit for that. I think that's more to do with the music press! And we're definitely not the sort of band that attracts people looking to change their image or

anything. We try to encourage people to be themselves, to be honest, to be a little happy-go-lucky, but that's all. As far as we're concerned, it's a case of, 'We're all dickheads, but let's have a nice time being dickheads together and maybe try to fix it.'"

"We do everything we can to get people out of the house, have a drink and enjoy a nice evening," says Ben. "But I really can't believe we're changing people's lives in any way."

Except, whether they know it or not, Mumford & Sons are doing just that. They're a refreshingly unfashionable and unselfconscious band who love music for music's sake, and their enthusiasm for it is every bit as infectious as the tremulous euphoria of 'Little Lion Man' and 'Winter Winds'.

In spite of what their critics might say, there's nothing calculated or cynical about them; after our interview we go downstairs to watch them play three new songs in soundcheck ('Lover Of The Light', 'Whispers In The Dark' and a stately country ballad that's currently nameless). Even in this chaotic setting – with roadies scurrying around the stage adjusting the levels on their amps – they're imbued with a quiet, solemn intensity that you can't take your eyes from, and that certainly can't be faked. That's why Mumford & Sons aren't too bothered by nu-folk explosions, platinum albums or critical acclaim: for them, right now, there is only the road.

Marcus: "For us, it's as much about making friends as it is the music. What's cool is that we can go to places like Australia, and find kindred spirits on the other side of the world. We want to record again very soon, but we also want to tour more. We enjoy it, and we find it's easy to write there. Ideas tend to come thick and fast during soundcheck. And there's never a mundane day."

Expect these nu-folk minstrels to wander a while yet.

THAT'S ALL FOLK!

If Mumford were marooned on a desert island, these are the albums they'd want with them

OLD CROW MEDICINE SHOW 'OCMS'



The Tennessee quintet are arguably the best country band in the world right now. There's none of that crappy modern Nashville gloss applied, either; this is music that sounds like it came from another century. "Old Crow is the band that we all bond over," says Marcus. "They're the one band that the four of us absolutely love."

CROSBY, STILLS & NASH 'CROSBY, STILLS & NASH'



The archetypal Laurel Canyon Americana album, Jimi Hendrix described it best when he called it "Groovy western sky music." Boasting some of the best harmonies ever committed to tape, it's an endlessly fascinating record that reveals something new with every listen and covers everything from jazz-rock to baroque English folk ditties.

THE BAND 'THE BAND'



The Band took almost every form of American music – folk, jazz, blues, country, ragtime and rock'n'roll – and distilled it into something that to this day has only ever been copied, never bettered. This second album was their high-watermark.

BRIGHT EYES 'I'M WIDE AWAKE, IT'S MORNING'



Conor Oberst's umpteenth album is an acoustic collection of plaintive, sorrowful and occasionally enraged songs about love and death in Bush's America. It's also a minor masterpiece, and you could argue that US Number One 'Lua' helped popularise this whole nu-folk thing in the first place.

THE INCREDIBLE STRING BAND 'THE 5000 SPIRITS OR THE LAYERS OF THE ONION'



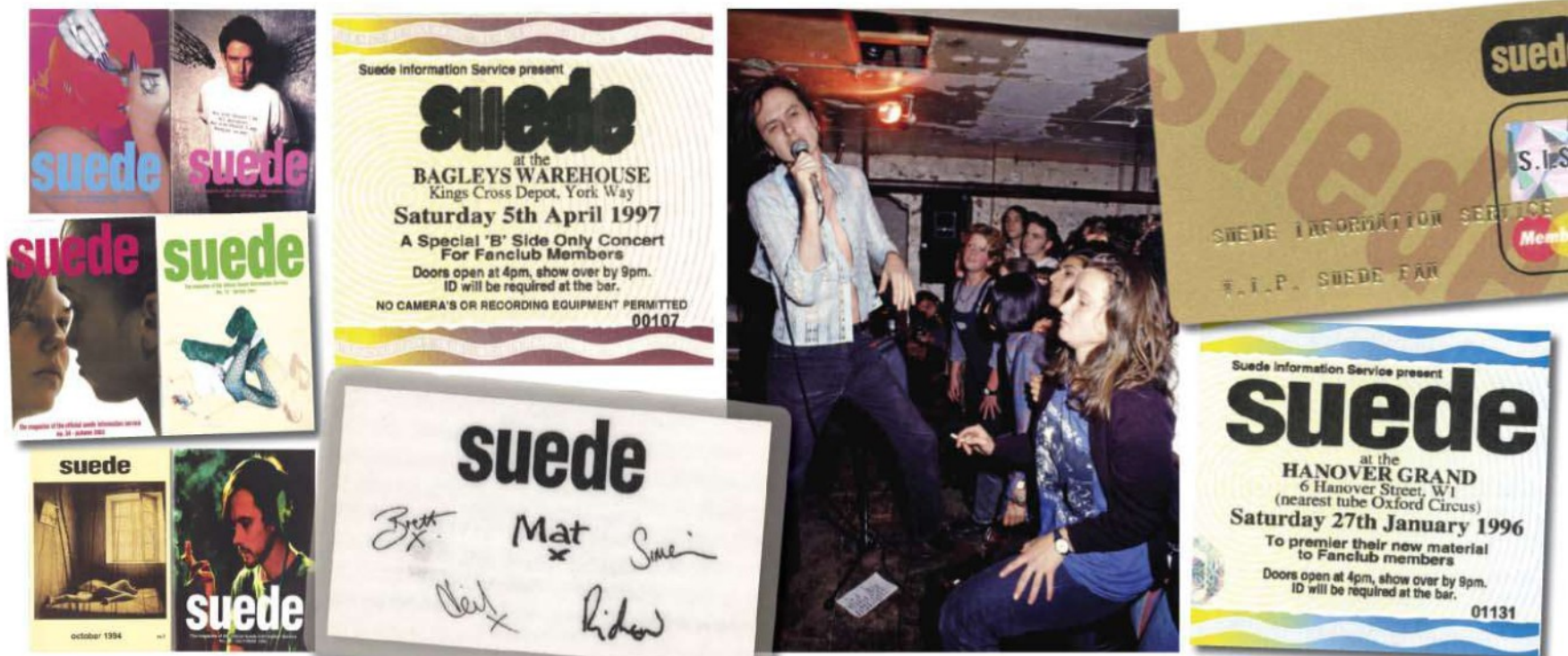
Adopting the basic principles of the British folk tradition and taking them to new psychedelic vistas, this 1967 album is a weird – and essential – slice of whimsy from one of Scotland's best (and most underrated) bands. From crackpot esoterica to songs about talking hedgehogs, you'll never hear anything quite like it.

NME.COM

Head to **NME.COM** for an exclusive video interview and behind-the-scenes footage of the band's **NME** cover photoshoot

“They were the ult

From uniting the future Bloc Party to helping members come out, **Suede** had the best fan



It was watching the video for ‘The Drowners’, on Saturday morning music programme *The Chart Show* in May 1992, that made me fall in love with Suede. I’m short-sighted so I screwed up my eyes to figure out who and what this amazing band were. I had just turned 22 and was living in Perth, Scotland. No longer being a teenager, I’d given up on being a mental nut for a band in the way I had been for The Smiths. But all that changed.

Suede seemed to be an amalgam of all my favourite groups: a bit Bowieish, a bit Smithsy, with Adam And The Ants drumming and a deliciously ridiculous vocal that sounded like a cross between Judy Garland and Johnny Rotten. They sounded, and looked, like nobody else.

I enrolled as member number 138 of the Suede fan club – or Suede Information Service as it was grandly titled – pretty soon afterwards. For that I got a signed photo and some photocopied lyric sheets. There was an invite to a special fan club gig at the 100 Club in London that September, but I couldn’t make the 800-mile round trip. I didn’t actually see them live until the

album came out the following year, but I found myself sucked deeper into the wider Suede World. Remember that these were the days before the internet – there was no email, no websites, no chat rooms.

Communication with other fans was by letter and homemade fanzines, advertised in the back of the SIS’ own mags. It was like being part of a clandestine organisation. I don’t think there’d been another band since The Smiths who had created their very own subculture quite like it.

Suede had that essential combination of talent and luck – they were definitely at the right place at the right time. There’d been a huge gap since the demise of The Smiths for an intelligent outsiders’ band; a group for slightly socially awkward types who felt alienated from the dominance of American grunge. The only other band at that time with a similar kind of appeal were the Manics, but Suede had the trump card in their whole sexual ambiguity; massively attractive to those who were confused socially and

sexually. Brett famously described himself as “a bisexual man who’s never had a homosexual experience”. Having an openly gay drummer in Simon Gilbert was hugely important too – especially as he was a punk rocker rather than your stereotypical gay pop star like Boy George. This was still at a time where the age of consent for homosexuality was 21, which seems unbelievable now. I know several Suede fans who came out thanks to that group – they’re a band that literally changed people’s lives. I know people who got married thanks to Suede, and of course there are plenty who went on to form their own bands because of them too. Kele Okereke and Russell Lissack from Bloc Party met through the SIS, and Natasha Khan of Bat For Lashes was an active member. It’s all a testament to the spirit of creativity the band inspired.

Suede announced another fan club show – at the LA2 underneath the Astoria – in December 1993. There was no way I was missing this one. By now, 800 miles seemed a short distance to travel.

Instead of a support act the band had arranged ‘Suede Karaoke’ where fans were invited to sing along with Suede backing tracks. I eagerly volunteered and belted through ‘So Young’ – getting the chance to support your favourite band was just one of the ways we were made to feel special. The band followed with an extended set, unveiling several new songs and including an acoustic section where Bernard wore a Santa hat. They ended with a 10-minute version of ‘Stay Together’ with roadie Pete Sissons on second guitar.

Inspired, I began my own Suede fanzine – *Suave & Elegant* – which was soon selling 300-plus copies an issue to fans who’d post a pound coin and an SAE. There were dozens of Suede fanzines at the time – there was even one called *Donna’s Directory*, which was a fanzine about all the other fanzines. The tagline for *Suave & Elegant* was ‘The Suede Fanzine That Takes The Piss’. I used to poke fun at some of the lyrics, because there was also a lot to laugh at, with repeated images of hire cars and “nuclear skies”. At one show the band sought me out, asking, “Who’s

ADDITIONAL WORDS: DAN MARTIN. ADDITIONAL PHOTOS: PAUL SLATTERY/RETNA. THANKS TO ALISON HALE AND DEE BARNFIELD FOR SHARING THEIR SUEDE INFORMATION SERVICE MEMORABILIA WITH US

SUEDE TIMELINE

OCT 1989: Lovers Brett Anderson and Justine Frischmann place an advert in *NME* looking for a lead guitarist. Bernard Butler gets the gig.

JUNE 1991: Frischmann leaves Anderson and the band to date Damon Albarn and form her own band, Elastica.

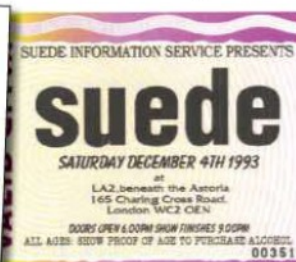
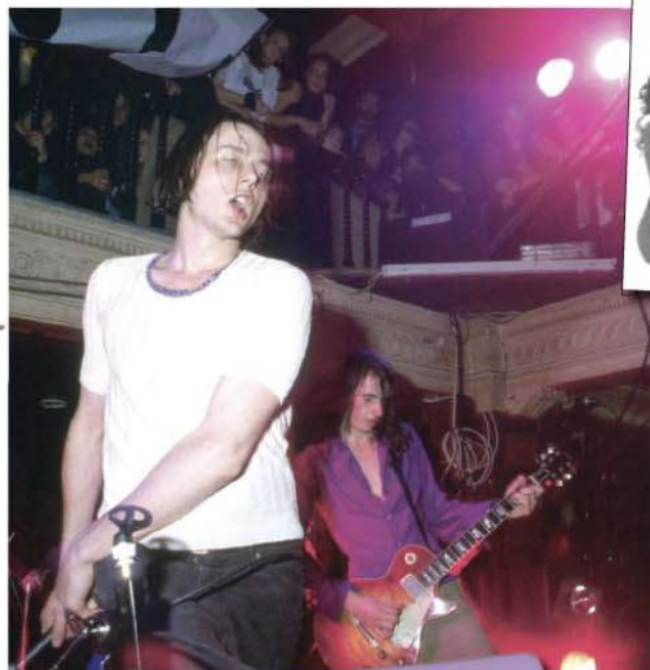
APR 1992: Suede appear on the cover of *Melody Maker* under the headline ‘The Best New Band In Britain’.

SEPT 1993: Band go legit as debut album ‘Suede’ wins the Mercury Music Prize.

OCT 1993: In the US the band have to rename themselves The London Suede over a copyright issue.

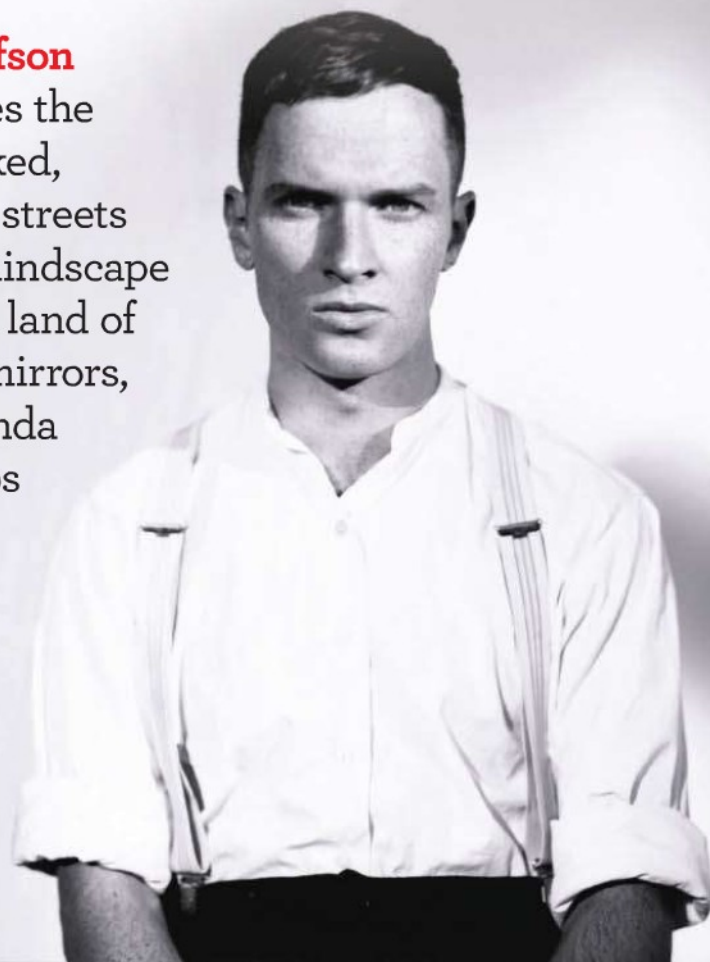
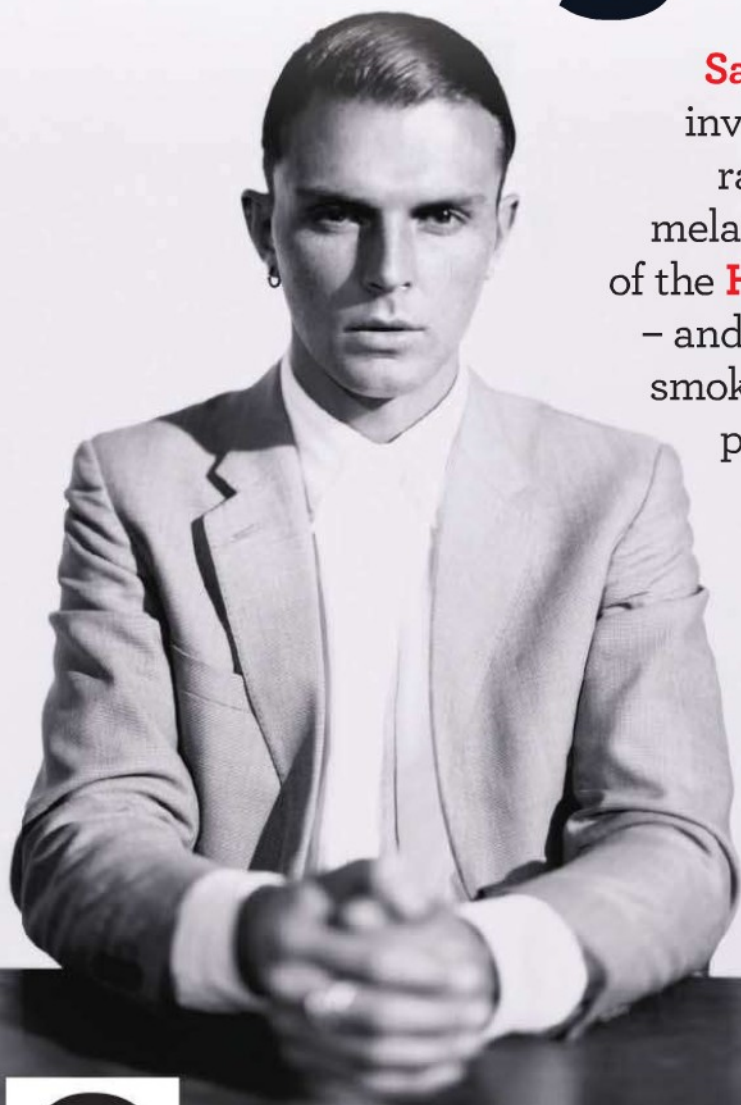
FEB 1994: Standalone single ‘Stay Together’ charts at Number Three, becoming their biggest hit to date.

JUNE 1994: Band thrown into crisis as Bernard Butler acrimoniously walks out shortly before the completion of ‘Dog Man Star’.



JAN 2010: Suede announce plans to reunite, with the 'Coming Up'-era line-up.

The Thought Police



(l-r): Theo Hutchcraft, Adam Anderson

Sam Wolfson investigates the rain-soaked, melancholic streets of the **Hurts** mindscape – and finds a land of smoke and mirrors, propaganda and fibs

Since the last time they spoke to *NME* – in our New Bands Issue in January – Hurts have refused to appear in public, releasing just two music videos which they filmed themselves. In fact, the small amount of interviews they have done in this time have taken place in their gloomy Manchester basement studio, which frontman Theo Hutchcraft tells us they haven't left for the best part of a year – bar a “two-week excursion to an abandoned radio station in minus-15-degree Gothenburg”.

But Hurts couldn't hide away forever and last month they played live for the first time. Their chosen venue? St Peter's Church, which lies in the middle of a run-down Salford estate. It was built in the 19th century as a fount of hope in one of the most poverty-stricken areas in England. “I used to see it every day on my way to uni,” says Theo. “I always thought, ‘One day, I'll play in there.’ I think it says a lot about Manchester; a monument of pride among the desperation and despair.” At the gig, Hurts' line-up was minimal. Joining the pair was ‘Richard’, an opera singer who Theo headhunted after seeing him take the lead role in *The Pirates Of Penzance*.

On the pews, hymn sheets with the words to Hurts' ‘Wonderful Life’. Above them, a light and visual show that would make Muse blush. And serving behind the bar? That'd be members of the Salford Women's Institute.

The general consensus on the first show has been one of slack jaws and a sense of personal inadequacy. “This is properly amazing,” tweeted our own Peter Robinson. In fact, the highlight, minimalist power ballad ‘Blood, Tears And Gold’, sounded so massive you can already hear yourself bawling along to it on Magic FM at 4am. As they had planned, Hurts' debut show left people stunned. In one night Hurts went from

a tip for 2010 to a fully-fledged, perfect pop band with vision spurting out of every orifice. You could say, by doing less Hurts have in fact done more.

It wasn't always this way: two years ago, Hurts were members of electro pop-goth band Daggers, whose disastrous first industry showcase pushed the band to breaking point. From there Theo and keyboardist Adam Anderson started to slim things down. First to go were surplus band members, ie everyone other than the two of them. Next, the sound. Daggers were actually better than an embarrassed Hurts now let on, but their Eurodisco shtick was cluttered and tacky. Hurts concentrated the

Hurts at St Peter's Church, Manchester, last month



Daggers sound down on a single emotion, then exaggerated it on a skyscraper scale. Finally, the output; Hurts have controlled every aspect from the beginning, self-producing videos, styling every photoshoot and buying up Hurts domain names for possible future expansion.

And how did they choose to control their world? Well, they started by making loads of cool shit up.

After Daggers split up, Theo and Anderson went to Verona. "It seemed like the most romantic idea in the world at the time. We just wanted to get away and Ryanair were doing cheap flights." According to their official band biography, it was here that they discovered 'disco lento'.

"We were trying to explain to this strange guy we met in a bar what kind of music we made," says Theo, down a telephone line from their aforementioned HQ. "We mentioned we sounded similar to Alphaville and he told us about disco lento. He said that after the Italo-disco dream had died, a lot of the artists involved had started writing Simon & Garfunkel pop ballads. That really gave us a vision for what we were doing because we had just gone from making these big bold Eurodisco tracks to a more lamented, minimal version of electronic music. Disco lento really reinforced our vision."

That's interesting, because we've been on the disco lento Wikipedia page and it seems a perfect fit for Hurts. There's no mention of the genre anywhere else on the internet except for a blog which only has three posts. And we've found some unused lento urls that are registered with Hurts' record label.

"Well, I'm fascinated that there's no information on it. That's what baffles me," says Theo. "This guy explained it to us but in the weirdest way possible. I guess it's no coincidence that it describes what we're doing so accurately. That's a very interesting observation."

So you didn't just make it up? "No."

It's just that this Wikipedia page is only four months old, the same as the blog.

"Oh right. Well, that's fortunate, isn't it. I mean, your guess is as good as mine. Maybe it's just a forgotten type of music that we hope to bring back."

Hmmm. In fact, disco lento is only mentioned in one line of the official biography the band sent out to the music industry. If they have fabricated an entire genre complete with artists, artwork and record labels, imagine the other hidden concepts that they could already be working on? How far does the world of Hurts spread?

After our interview we tried to chase up some other rumours. About the involvement of their A&R, rumoured to be their unofficial third member. About

delegate the thoughts inside our heads to other people, it would simply cease to be Hurts. Obviously. Discussion, understanding and grooming are things which may happen. But so long as we shall live, we will continue to bathe in control. Hurts will grow and extend as and when we want it to."

We thought we'd try going straight to their A&R - Spice Girls songwriter Biff Stannard - about his involvement. He came back to us with this: "Much like an exercise regime for an athlete. I provide a service similar to a personal trainer. I have experience of building muscle and fitness, however, my sole aim is for my athlete to beat me in the race."

Of course, these aren't really answers, more like propaganda. The idea of athleticism has been much touted as part of the Hurts vision. That's what they're sticking to. Hurts are almost authoritarian with their image; not difficult interviewees - indeed, there's a sharp sense of humour at play beneath the surface - but serious nonetheless. And, considering the knowledge and depth with which they speak, their interview answers have been strikingly similar, if not planned. Any attempt to point out holes in their worldview are denied outright.

You might draw parallels with another Manchester band obsessed with control. Joy Division's Ian Curtis watched it slip through his fingers. Hurts, by their own admission, gorge themselves on it. "For us, control is as addictive as the internet," says Adam via email. Hurts needs to have power; not just in their music, but every facet of the world that they inhabit.

This is something to be celebrated - the best pop has often been meticulously planned. But it's also fairly subversive considering they're going to

be inhabiting a world of commercial radio and advert soundtracks. Like Lady Gaga and Rihanna, they operate in the most commercial musical sphere there is, but are constantly trying to push against the

boundaries that the modern pop world creates. "All of those people we've mentioned are people who we think we can stand alongside," says Theo. "Gaga is taking control back from Britney Spears, Rihanna from Whitney Houston."

And Hurts? They're taking control back from Manchester. Or at least, a perception of Manchester that has long dogged its citizens and its creativity. "It's not like lad-rock didn't have its place. In the '90s, Oasis captured a perfect snapshot of what this city was like. [But] I feel like bands like us, Everything Everything and Delphic are breaking through the nostalgia of what Manchester was and helping it re-invent itself once again."

Their vision doesn't just end with the northwest - every band has had tin-pot ideas of 'cracking America'. With Hurts, though, you get the sense there is

a methodical campaign of expansion. They're already synchronising the entire British campaign in Germany, but there's no reason why they'd stop at Europe. As Theo points out repeatedly, the whole point of their band is to make music that resonates with as many people as possible, "especially for those who don't speak English". Hurts want it all, and they're not about to let any investigative Wikipedia-ing stop them.

Their performance, their attitude and, above all, their songs are head and shoulders above any other British pop band right now. First they'll take Manchester, then they'll take Berlin.

Just don't trust a word they say. Enjoy the myth-making...

The Truth Hurts

Hurts' guarded attitude to interviews and passion for mythmaking means they're a band dogged by rumours. Can you guess the truth from the fibs? Turn the page upside down to see the answers

- 1 Hurts were initially considered to produce the Simon Cowell charity version of 'Everybody Hurts' but were rejected because they were considered too melodramatic.**
- 2 Hurts' two weeks in a giant deserted radio station in Gothenburg ended in full-scale cabin fever. They had to call management to get them out because they were descending into actual madness.**
- 3 Betfair are offering odds on the first pop duo to have a Number One in 2010. Hurts are 6/1, Mini Viva 10/1, Sound Of Arrows 5/2 and Jedward are at 3/1.**
- 4 Fame Academy winner David Sneddon has crawled out from under his reality TV rock to write songs for the debut Hurts album.**
- 5 Hurts met while their mates were getting in a tussle outside a bar. Theo and Adam went inside to talk about music, leaving their friends to fight in the car park.**
- 6 Adam has an entire wardrobe just for black polo necks. They range from "sombre" to "austere".**
- 7 Rihanna's 'Unfaithful' (ie the greatest pop ballad of the 21st century) is a tribute to the ideals of disco lento.**
- 8 Biff Stannard wakes Theo and Adam up at 7am every morning for a jog round the Northern Quarter.**
- 9 The band's enthusiasm toward athletics comes from Adam's time filming the greyhound races at Bellevue dog track.**
- 10 When they headline the NME Radar Tour, Hurts plan to join Everything Everything onstage for a cover of Extreme's 'More Than Words'.**

1. False 2. True 3. False 4. Not Confirmed 5. True 6. False 7. Not Confirmed 8. False 9. True 10. Not Confirmed - but we're crossing our fingers anyway

"So long as we shall live, we will continue to bathe in control"

Theo Hutchcraft

the other songwriters they're alleged to have been working with - including Fame Academy winner David Sneddon. We asked Adam about Sneddon's rumoured contributions. This is the email response we got back: "Decisions are like weights, you have to be strong and carry them above your head with pride, like an Olympian. The music is our fundamental ware, our javelin, the steely spikes on our running shoes. We must retain control of the music or else everything else will fall apart. We are not interested in treason, in overthrowing The Man, because we understand his value to our craft, and the beauty of our co-operation and collaboration."

Riiight. So you're saying you don't work with anyone else?

"Delegation is not something we are interested in, especially not within our musical vision. It is impossible to

IS THIS THE MOST HATED MAN IN DUBSTEP?

Loathed by the scene godfathers, **Rusko** – fresh from producing the new MIA album – is set to have the last laugh. **Jaimie Hodgson** explains why

There's nothing wrong with having fun. But I've got no time for that sound, whoever does it," fumed Kode9, dubstep's Yoda, when *NME* asked him about Rusko's 'jump-up dubstep' hybrid back in October '09. "That's like a different music to me, with no relation to what I play or why I got into the sound in the first place." Kode9, one of the sound's pioneers, reflects the common attitude in the genre's 'old guard'. For Rusko's attempt at "avin' a laff" read 'dumbing down', contradicting the spirit from which *their* scene was born.

Cast your mind back, and by the summer of 2006 dubstep's cold winds were blowing stronger and stronger. It was fast emerging as one of the most remarkable, organic UK underground scenes ever. Yet, to curious outsiders its ominous atmospherics, metallic rhythms and quagmire of low-end frequencies could potentially feel intimidating, a sound for those that 'knew'. Even worse, to the carefree Friday night reveller, its intense fabric of dystopian textures and uneasy moods could maybe seem a little bit, erm, boring perhaps?

Then, the subject of Kode9's vitriol, a 21-year-old Leeds-born newbie-converttee called Chris Mercer, dropped his debut EP, 'SNES Dub'. It was a snaking riddle of 16-bit Nintendo samples, cheeky parping horns and euphoric energy twitches. "It was a definite shot in the dark," he remembers, "bouncing forward in his chair in a busy South Bank café. "Half of it was made before I'd even discovered dubstep. It was just sped-up digital-dub I'd made, influenced by the soundsystem culture up north. Then I realised what was going on with the dubstep scene and put that out as a kind of feeler, to test the water."

From the get-go, what Rusko did with his Leeds cohort Caspa (a pal of his next door neighbour) was different. Whereas the scene originators, Digital Mystikz, Kode9, Oris Jay and their ilk, were born from a cold-shouldered zen lineage of sound and attitude, the Yorkshire lads just wanted to party. "When I fell in love with dub culture it was all about the energy of the soundsystem," he ponders of the birth of his passion. "I loved the idea of

constructing this bass force from scratch, from wood; this fort of partying. Then this quick-fire blast of tune after tune, getting as many in as physically possible. There was just no intensity like it."



"I'M GONNA TRY AND MAKE MEAT LOAF DUBSTEP. HOW SICK WOULD THAT BE!"

RUSKO

Like Danny Dyer staggering into a Rastafarian chanting circle, Rusko's presence was immediately met with mixed receptions. The lines were hastily drawn. Before long the diehard 'purists' learned to defend their turf by taking aim at Rusko's growing clique, sneer-after-snipe. They called it 'thug-stup', or 'wobble', or 'goon tunes'. In parallel, each Rusko single seemed wackier than the last. From the ode-to-*Catchphrase* 'boing-a-thon' 'Mr Chipz' to the brazen squelching gurn-fest 'Get Your Cock Out'. It's not hard to see where the rasta screw faces came from. But when the white label of Caspa & Rusko's 'Cockney Thug' hit the shelves in early 2008, it felt like a seismic dirty bomb had been dropped in the middle of the battlefield. Sampling an Alan Ford geezer/gangsta monologue from Guy Ritchie's *Snatch*, it centered around the most relentless of 'wobble' bass quakes known to man and a manic trademark double-time skank. Its increasingly typical 'wobble' fetishism became simultaneously the most derided element of the dubstep explosion and the most embraced new sound for



Remember this face. You may need therapy but remember it anyway

everyman good-times clubbers. Jah's loss was Annie Mac's gain.

"I guess I've always just been trying to make people think differently about it," he says, dragging his hand through his straggly overgrown mohawk. "I'm obsessed with dubstep, geeky about other producers. But I guess I felt like there was still stuff to be done with it, stuff I craved. I wanted it brighter, more energetic, sillier. Bass is everything to me, but you can't take anything too seriously. We're on this earth to have fun." And have fun Rusko does. Although spending his formative year having to turn down DJ sets because, well, he couldn't DJ, once he'd honed his show – and, make no mistake, he puts on a show – nothing could hold him back. It's fair to say that he remains one of dubstep's most sought-after DJs. An onstage shtick that's one-part 'avin' it' '90s superstar DJ to two-parts flailing white boy mosher.

Topping the bill at Brixton's Plan B last Friday to a mixed-up crowd of hip-hoppers, UK funky kids and post-dubstep ravers, he flung himself across the decks, smashed half-downed bottles and gurned and screamed at the throng – like a pillhead in a circle pit.

"Sometimes I'm more excited to hear some tracks than the crowd," he beams. "I live to hear my tunes played that loud and I only get to do it every couple of days. I never get over the buzz." It was to resounding 'ah, that makes sense' nods that he confessed his past as the frontman of ska-punk seven-piece troupe 5 Finger Discount. A nostalgic discussion of once-notorious early noughties UK skankers Capdown follows. "Eighteen months ago at The Big Chill me and Caspa closed the mainstage on the last day," he recalls. "I pulled down the fader on 'Cockney Thug's intro and 10,000 voices screamed back, 'Wake the fuck up!'"

But it's far from just "lairy electro kids", as Rusko coins them, that flock to him like the great I Am. His debut album – the most perfectly titled long-player of all time, 'OMG' – is released via worldwide booty music supremo Diplo's Mad Decent imprint in two months' time. He and his gang of global-ghetto-funk party-starters had been playing sets consisting of 60 per cent Rusko tunes since late '07. "I'd known Dave [Taylor, Switch] for years, then when he introduced me to Wes [Pentz, Diplo], shit just kicked off."



Makin' bacon with the mixing desk

Now based in LA, it's fair to say he's become the most glam dubstepper. Through Wes and Dave he ended up decamped in – get this – Bob Rock of Metallica production fame's studio, disassembled and transported to – wait for it – Hawaii, producing the entirety of MIA's first post-superstardom album. "I think it's in my top five rock'n'roll stories," he nods, pondering. "She likes to change things with who she works with on each album, so when they sounded me out I obviously bit their hands off. I mean, do no-brainers get any more obvious?" he remembers getting the call. "I think they saw me as the right dude to harness what she's known for and nudge it somewhere fresh." Keen not to spoil any surprises, it is with a bubbling sense of smugness that he amps up expectations around what went on in paradise. "We got comfy and did things real nice. Trust," he smirks. "She's very hands-on in all elements of writing. She brought loads of percussion she'd pre-recorded on trips to India and Africa, so it still makes sense with what people know of her. But expect a new flavour. We're talking heavy metal guitar, ridiculous dubstep basslines and a lot of surprises."

With an all-for-one wink and a quick-key commercial immediacy comes two key things. Number One, sales: everything he's released to date is a near-instant sell-out, every show a roadblock. The list of remix requesters reads like the guestlist to the Radio 1 controller's birthday party: Adele, Basement Jaxx, Little Boots, The Prodigy. In a week he returns to the States to start work on Flo Rida's new record. "My 2Pac and Dre 'California Love' remix just got playlisted on the biggest radio station in California," he enthuses. "The first dubstep tune to get playlisted on US radio. That's what I'm here to do, take this bass worldwide." Rusko might just have found the sturdy figure to help him do just that. "I was pissing around on Twitter the other day saying, 'Oh, I'd love to work with Meat Loaf,'" he hisses, breaking into chuckles. "After a few 'ROFL's and what have you, I get an email in my inbox from Meat's

RUSKO'S GONZO PARTY PLAYLIST!



JAMMIN 'Tonka (Menta remix)'

A growling and grooving proto-dubstep garage tune from the hands of the one and only DJ Zinc, back from 2001.



DJ ZINC '138 Trek'

Another quaking jerky garage number from the Godfather from back when dubstep was just a twinkle in this man's eye.



CASPA & RUSKO 'Cockney Thug'

The tune that blew dubstep apart, making the sound as palatable to the beer-boy brigade as it was to stern-faced dreads.



DIGITAL MYSTIKZ 'Learn'

A typically low-slung blanket of dub hypnotics and ganja haze from the scene flag-bearers, Digital Mystikz.



SKREAM

'Midnight Request Line'

The anthem of all anthems, a true classic. Spiralling and unhinged, it was the sound's first true breakthrough smash from the then-19-year-old wunderkind.

management saying, 'Are you serious about this?' So I thought, 'Fuck it, send the parts through!'" So is this it? Is Meat Loaf going dubstep? "Oh my god! How sick would that be? I'm gonna try and make him. I know he works with a classical composer, so I'm just gonna smash it the fuck up."

There's a few things you can't even begin to fault Rusko on: sense of humour, ambition and a thick skin. People call you stupid? "I love being stupid. It's music to make people smile," he says, smiling. "I make tracks for the dancefloor, simple as. To make people happy on a Friday night off their faces." But Rusko, surely it stings when the pillars of your scene renounce you? "They were there before me. They can say what they want," he shrugs. "Some people like what the originators do and what I do, some don't. As long as there's a 140bpm bassline spreading across the globe I couldn't care less whether it's dark and minimal or if it sounds like us." With that, he has a car waiting. Next stop? Hollywood? Jupiter? "Plymouth!" he barks. "700 people sold-out on a Tuesday night. Ready to go. Come on!"

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Darwin's theory of depression

We never had **Darwin Deez** down as a troubled soul, but maybe he just needed to meet **Gavin Haynes**

An old proverb says that the coolness of a hipster's hair can be judged by the number of children that point and laugh at him in the street. Which makes Darwin Deez very cool indeed. "Yeah, it used to be, like, all the time. But, you know, I don't give them the chance anymore. Three or four years ago it was a hairstyle I really enjoyed wearing all the time. But I've learned it's not worth it. You don't have to play venues where people don't like you. It's your choice. I guess," he ponders, dipping back into the preceding chat, "that's also the key to overcoming clinical depression..."

With his enormo Jew-fro, his devotion to the teaching of Indian spiritual guru Meher Baba, his sleek, peppy Strokes-by-Jeffrey Lewis pop darts, his onstage dance routines between songs, his professed lactose intolerance, his job at the same New York vegan restaurant where Devendra Banhart once worked, Darwin seems the very model of the carefree urban bohemian. So it's odd to learn that he's only recently come out of five years spent lurching between barely-functioning and catatonic, riding the black train of clinical depression.

What drove him there? Well, depression is a mist that settles, and moving away from home was certainly part of it. He was also dissatisfied with the college he'd chosen (Wesleyan, home to hippy tykes such as Amazing Baby and MGMT) and was unhappy with living a lie.

"I hate structured learning. I hated Wesleyan. It's such a small town that there really is nothing to do there. I had this deluded belief that I could follow these two separate career paths. That I could please my parents by getting a degree and a proper job. But that I could somehow live the life of a freewheeling musician on top of that. Not true. So I dropped out of college..."

Then there was the Nietzsche obsession, which had bloomed far beyond anything he'd imagined when he first picked up *Beyond Good And Evil* aged 18. "It was the first time in my life that I'd really questioned anything Baba

had said, that love exists. But Nietzsche says the opposite. That love is 'slave mentality'. For me, it was a deep, deep bummer. I felt obligated intellectually to explore this, and find out whether it was the truth. That was the hard thing, because it meant that everything I'd ever felt wasn't true."

He stared into the abyss. It was a dark time, and its imprint can still be felt. Because his songs are so infinitely sugar-pop-snappy, most people miss how bleak Darwin's lyrics often are. 'The Bomb Song', for instance, imagines life after a nuke apocalypse. 'The Suicide Song' drops in on someone in the act of jumping ("From the window ledge I fall/ Watch my necktie whip back in the wind").

"I think the reasons I pick up a guitar to write a song are generally quite negative emotions: fear, anger, loss. But the things that make me want to turn on the radio, or dance, or play music, are the positive ones."

The solution, when it came, was a combination of things; meds, dropping out of college, binning Nietzsche, therapy, and moving to New York. "The problem with depression is that it creates this negative cycle, negative perspectives, which self-reinforce. And, on a sort of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy mode, there's some adaptations you have to do to your mindset, to break those habits, to avoid those patterns and establish new ones."

He broke the patterns. He established new habits of success. He won. He is, however, contemplating going back on meds to counter the increasingly ascendant ADD side to his personality.

By way of illustrating this concept, he immediately tells a completely unrelated anecdote about his favourite line from the new Vampire Weekend record, then asks what we were talking about.

Happiness: it sure suits Darwin Deez.

NME.COM

Listen to a Darwin NME Radio interview at NME.COM/blogs. Plus watch him on NME TV's Radar at 11pm on March 30.

"The reasons I pick up a guitar to write a song are quite negative emotions: fear, anger, loss"

DARWIN DEEZ

ALBUMS

ALL THE RELEASES THAT MATTER *Edited by Emily Mackay*

Different folks



GOLDHEART ASSEMBLY
WOLVES AND THIEVES
(FIERCE PANDA)

7

Beating the Yanks at the Americana game – if only the lyrics stayed closer to home

Serious question: when did indie music get so beardy? We're not talking about indie in the blog-reading, leather-patch sense, either. Beardiness stalks young Britain too. It's not just our cover stars Mumford & Sons who play to ecstatic crowds of meowed-up teens. Laura Marling and Noah And The Whale have a following so devoted it borders on the hysterical. And now here's Goldheart Assembly, another youthful squadron of Londoners who record in a Norfolk steam-train museum (your quirk siren should be ringing) and sport cardigans, waistcoats and facial hair with impunity.

Since Noah broke big in 2007, indie-folk has gone overground in a way no-one could have predicted. Banks and mobile phone companies use folk in ads to lend their brands a sense of pigeon-toed, warm, fuzzy informality. TV producers are in on the act too: a recent episode of *Skins* climaxed with JJ serenading his girlfriend with a ukulele. In 2010, it seems, if you want to convey youth and modernity, you use acoustic music on the soundtrack.

All of which works in Goldheart Assembly's favour. If they'd emerged in less auspicious times, there'd be a danger they'd be overlooked, since their speciality – that weird oxymoron, British

Americana – calls to mind a slew of underwhelming late '90s/early '00s bands: disheveled, twangy-voiced crooners who always seemed to have gold in their name (Lowgold, Goldrush, etc), received rabidly positive reviews and sold about 28 records each. It might seem a subtle distinction, but it matters. Are Goldheart Assembly to be the British Fleet Foxes? Or just the new Turin Brakes?

The answer, it turns out, is neither. There's nothing insular or heads-down about this album, no stale whiff of the log cabin about it. Opener 'King Of Rome' is bracingly direct. It functions as a rousing showcase of the band's astonishingly rich, precise vocal harmonies. Singers to a man, the sextet do a neat line in stately West Coast jangle, all weeping open chords and silvery embellishments. It means their debut album is big on the communally benevolent mood that, when experienced live, transforms a lager-scented tavern like The Dublin Castle into a palm tree-strewn stretch of Laurel Canyon, if only for a brief second.

There are some crafty sonic surprises, too: on 'Jesus Wheel', which gives way to an unexpected rumble of volcanic distortion, or 'Reminder', a lopsided interlude that's threaded through with reverberating lead guitar, before collapsing into eerie, disembodied laughter. Turin Brakes never did anything like this.

So why are we giving the album a seven, not an eight? It's because of John Herbert's and James Dale's lyrics. There's a weird resignation, a puzzling lack of passion. On 'Carnival 4 (The Carrying Song)', he refers to a nameless "load", repeating the line, "If you weigh me down, you might just wear me down". Similarly, on 'Anvil' he sings, "All new things are a burden to me".

What is this? Give it a rest! You're not old enough to be grizzled. Moreover, it doesn't quite square with the band's onstage demeanour. Live, Goldheart are an explosion of energy and (unusual, this) actual smiles. So it's strange to hear them singing in this world-weary, defeated mode. It doesn't sound authentic. It feels forced.

Cry-in-your-beer lyrics are what Americana's all about, but it's possible to use genre conventions while still singing about your own life. Goldheart Assembly have crafted an indecently lush-sounding debut, it's just not about *them*. When they start writing in their own voice instead of clichés, they'll be untouchable. **Luke Lewis**

DOWNLOAD: 1) 'King Of Rome' 2) 'Under The Waterway' 3) 'Last Decade'

BREAKAGE
FOUNDATION (DIGITAL SOUNDBOY)

8



Breakage's d'n'b past explains why the spectre of ragga samples and Amen breaks haunt 'Foundation' like the

persistent whiff of reefer smoke. Still, his groove-laden take on dubstep is more concerned with the future than the past. It's to his credit that the Burial collaboration 'Vial', brilliant though it is, is actually one of the weaker moments here, the spooked garage sound paling in comparison to 'Temper', a stark elegy to the moment when the paranoia kicks in. It's on 'Speechless', a heart-popping Donae'o collaboration with a rolling bassline and processed guitar solo, that proves bass music's next steps needn't be shackled to the abstract – they can be massive strides towards world domination. **Louise Brailey**
DOWNLOAD: 'Speechless'

TO ROCOCO ROT
SPECULATION (DOMINO)

5



With their last album 'ABC 123', a tribute to the 50th anniversary of the Helvetica typeface, it seemed as if To Rococo

Rot were to follow their German forebears, the mighty Kraftwerk, celebrating the straight line in pursuit of joyous modernity. Sadly, with 'Speculation', their journey aboard the trans-Europe express to experimentalism seems to have been derailed. While the likes of 'Away' and 'Ship' trundle pleasantly along with an assortment of beeps and whirrs, it takes an appearance from Faust's Jochen Irmmer on the eerie chimes of 'Friday' to help 'Speculation' move from tuneful to testing. Too bad they couldn't have made a similar Faustian pact for the rest of the record. **Ben Hewitt**
DOWNLOAD: 'Friday'

WHITE BELT YELLOW TAG
METHODS (DISTILLER)

6



Who'd have ever thought someone from Yourcodenameis:milo would go on to make something vaguely

decent? Justin Locky – partnered now not only by Craig Philbin, but by one-time Cooper Temple Clause Tom Bellamy – makes 'Methods' even more of an unlikely triumph. More broken Britpoppers than Broken Bells, the duo are the very embodiment of scrapheap-indie, yet 'Methods' fizzles with daisy-fresh exuberance and shiny production. The tunes probably have more sheen than Locky or Bellamy would desire – polished in a lamey, little-bit-Coldplay way – but the bleepy, string-ripping FX prove that the duo are striving to be more than simply flyweight guitar cannon fodder. **Matt Wilkinson**
DOWNLOAD: 'Tell Your Friends (It All Worked Out)'



SHARLEEN SPITERI
 THE MOVIE SONGBOOK (MERCURY)

0



One tries to keep an open mind in this game, but honestly, Sharleen Spiteri doing covers of classic movie soundtrack songs?

Why not just turn up on the *NME* CD pile with a big 'KICK ME' sign Sellotaped to your back? The sheer scale of the delusion of a woman whose name is a byword for MOR mediocrity, in thinking that she can reinvigorate classics like 'If I Can't Have You' and 'Windmills Of Your Mind', defies the very furthest limits of human belief. The latter is a particularly ghastly desecration as Sharleen plays it all kittenish, and Berlin's 'Take My Breath Away' translated into Spiteri's signature country-lite snooze is similarly awful. Stick to making Tannoy music for upscale supermarket chains, love. **Pete Cashmore**

DOWNLOAD: Absolutely none of it

CLIPSE
 TIL THE CASKET DROPS (COLUMBIA)

7



When Pusha T raps, "Cocaine aside, all the bloggers behoove/My critics finally have a verse of mine to jerk off to", on

album opener 'Freedom' it's a typically Clique moment. Loaded with meaning, it's a potshot at reviewers who wanted their flawless second album 'Hell Hath No Fury' - its tales of dealing crack and minimal score making it the unofficial soundtrack to *The Wire* - to be a confessional. Yet, simultaneously, Pusha T and Malice admit bloggers are necessary; they might have misread their references but sales-wise Clique needed all the publicity they could get.

More than that, though, in using the sort of archaic language - such as "behoove" - that even a medieval throwback like Joanna Newsom would struggle to employ, it's an example of the way Clique embody brain trouncing brawn in hip-hop.

OK, since their last opus sold so poorly, they are chasing dollar here with a Neptunes-assisted move toward big, slick choonage. But the Thornton brothers' self-reflection tempers everything brilliantly, even on the dated 'Counseling' and the woolly, synth-helmed 'Champion', on which they swagger, "I thought that life was a bad bitch, bad car/Nah, it's with your kids watching Madagascar in the headset of a H3 with a crash bar".

Never quite hitting the peak of 'Hell...' they walk a fine line here between fame-hungry thugs - something that ill-fits them - and existential thinkers with the "intellect of Einstein" and a fondness for sonic dissonance. Thankfully, with the big-riffing 'Freedom', the ear-worming piano motif of 'Popular Demand (Popeyes)', and the grisly-themed dancehall of 'There Was A Murder', it's the latter side that wins out. **Chris Parkin**

DOWNLOAD: 'Freedom'

CHRISTY & EMILY
 NO REST (KLANGBAD)

7



You may not have heard of Christy & Emily yet, but they get themselves noticed. John Peel favourite Robert Lloyd

requested their support in 2007 after being blown away by a show. A year later Faust man Hans Joachim Irmiler had the same experience and invited them into his studio: 'No Rest' is the result. The teaming of self-taught punk-kid Christy with Emily, a trained classical pianist, results in a restless piece of work. The Brooklyn duo's third album captures a sticky, Patti Smith moodiness with the restraint of Cate Le Bon and is peppered with eclectic styles but never overbakes ideas. Chillwave seems contagious in contemporary Brooklyn; here's to an album that glides above the fuzz. **Hazel Sheffield**

DOWNLOAD: 'Sundowners'

KIDS IN GLASS HOUSES
 DIRT (ROADRUNNER)

5



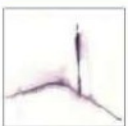
"We all just wanna be Prince really," claims KIGH frontman Aled Phillips of his band's new record. Well, let's just say 'Dirt'

falls a bit short of 'Purple Rain'. Glassjaw or Lostprophets perhaps... but surely not even these two would stoop so low as to collaborate with punk-pop jokers New Found Glory on 'Maybe Tomorrow' and Frankie from The Saturdays on 'Undercover Lover'. And that's exactly where this Welsh quintet botch their second offering; those two death-by-crige tracks unravel an otherwise fairly impressive attempt at fierce, stadium-slaying sing-along rock. All young riff-merchants should ask themselves this when making music: would Biffy do it? If the answer's no, then leave well alone. **Camilla Pia**

DOWNLOAD: 'Youngblood'

MARK BEAZLEY
 STATELESS (TRACE)

6



The title for this collection of instrumental meanderings is an apt one. Never extremely loud, uncomfortable or extremely anything really, 'Stateless' is underpinned by a placeless unease that'll turn you into an emotional nomad confused as to which part of the brain to rest this music upon. Tracks such as 'Four Fourteen' and 'Four Fifty One' are chaotic in the most polite way possible - none of the orchestral horn or string sounds are new, but the way they're put together befits an album recorded in the Welsh countryside while Beazley was writing the score for a Discovery Channel documentary about space probes. It makes for an interesting listen, albeit one that suffers for its shilly-shallying between the idyllic and the morose. **Kev Kharas**

DOWNLOAD: 'Four Fourteen'



Love fuzz

DUM DUM GIRLS
 I WILL BE (SUB POP)

8

More than just another garage rock pastiche, these girls have real heart

For those dissenters who accused LA's Dum Dum Girls of riding on the coat-tails of similarly suffixed gal-pals Vivian Girls, it's time to eat your words. It may have been a long time coming, but the debut album from this West Coast four-piece proves that despite sharing an obsession with fuzz, the Mary Chain and Shangri-Las melodies with their contemporaries, Dum Dum Girls are very much their own women. With 'I Will Be', they unfurl a sound far more intricate and subtle than their Brooklyn rivals. 'Blank Girl' (featuring Crocodiles' Brandon Welch) and 'Jail La La' each usurp the Vivian Girls' dream-pop girl-group harmonies by dint of Dee Dee Penny's effortlessly cool, sugary croons. Make no mistake: as a self-confessed 'choir nerd', Dee Dee (real name Kristin Gundred) has the vocal chops to see off all competitors.

It was she who initiated the band as a bedroom project before roping in the likes of drummer Frankie Rose (ex of both Crystal Stilts and - yes - Vivian Girls). Both sticking to the garage rock template of outsider gang-dom and upsetting the genre's canonical history as a tiresomely male-dominated field (the band's name is a pointed play on a song from international man of mayhem Iggy Pop's solo debut 'The Idiot'), this rollicking debut album is a balance-redressing, cliché-bucking tonic.

'It Only Takes One Night' possesses both the frenzy and the cool of The Cramps' signature sound, but in place of that band's raw weirdness there's the lulling breeze of Dee Dee's vocal, evocative of a sedated Eartha Kitt. The

record strays far beyond the basics of rockabilly and garage rock: 'Yours Alone' may feature Yeah Yeah Yeahs' Nick Zinner on reverberating, fuzzy guitar, but the tenderness of Dee Dee's vocal transcends genre boundaries: "Met him at the school yard, five years old/Told him I would love him 'til I'm cold/We held hands, we took walks/My first kiss was at the docks... All my love is yours alone". Rather than a mere stylistic nod to the girl group sound, Dum Dum Girls offer a subtle-toned exploration of the politics of the personal of which Ellie Greenwich would be proud, typified by latest single 'Jail La La', which is equally lustful and sentimental.

'Bhang Bhang, I'm A Burnout' recalls the dulcet tones of The Breeders circa 'Divine Hammer', while 'Oh Mein Me' takes its cue from Kim and Kelley Deal's very own 'German Studies' textbook. Yet the song is not just an exhilarating journey into the foreign languages, but an analysis of the rollercoaster ride of love at first sight.

Admittedly, 'I Will Be' at times lacks the raw kinetic energy and fury that surged through early single 'Catholicked'. The decision to exclude that song from the album is an unfathomable act to say the least. Still, there's more than enough here to compensate for such minor misgivings: ultimately, 'I Will Be' is a convincing retort from an unfairly maligned band. Over to you, Vivian Girls. **Ash Dosanjh**

DOWNLOAD: 1) 'Bhang Bhang, I'm A Burnout' 2) 'Yours Alone' 3) 'Jail La La'

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BLACKLIST MIDNIGHT OF THE CENTURY (WEIRD)

6



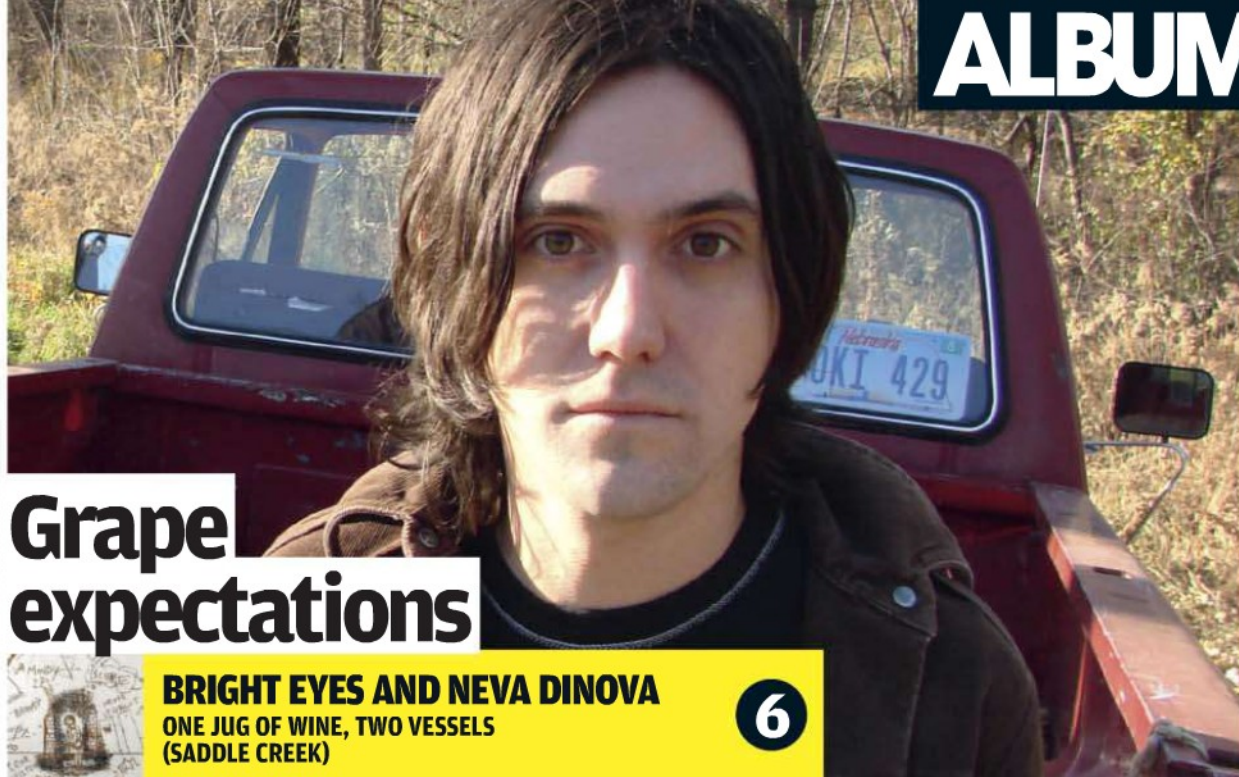
Post-Interpol, us Brits have churned out a succession of groups turning the dark ore of that band's influences into a succession of inferior alloys; Editors' bendy spoon, White Lies' pound shop aluminium foil. New Yorkers Blacklist toil at a similar forge but retain a sense of arch grace. It might be best enjoyed with a fragile chemical mind in the company of a black-haired girl who could do with a few sausage rolls, but this tour around Bunnymen and early U2 is executed with panache; 'Flight Of The Demoiselles' and 'Julie Speaks' teeter on The Edge-style histrionic guitar flourishes. There's no new dawn in 'Midnight...', but it's a shade of the nocturnal worth embracing nonetheless. **Luke Turner**
DOWNLOAD: 'Flight Of The Demoiselles'

PRINS THOMAS PRINS THOMAS (FULL PUPP)

7



Among certain bearded record collectors, Prins Thomas is a god. With his fellow Norwegians, Lindstrøm and 'Todd' Terje, he forms cosmic disco's modern holy trinity, without whom there might have been no Horse Meat Disco, no Italians doing it better. His best remixes (see Fredo Viola's 'The Sad Song' or Doves' 'Kingdom of Rust') are renowned for their controlled drama. Thomas' own music is more discursive, and this solo debut (seven tracks, 60 minutes) has its whimsical, proggy longueurs. Yet, when the krautrock, disco and early techno stars align, Thomas soars. 'Sauerkraut' is stunning. Building coquettishly with a gloriously melodic pay-off, it sounds like Belle & Sebastian in search of the perfect groove. **Tony Naylor**
DOWNLOAD: 'Slangemusikk'



Grape expectations

BRIGHT EYES AND NEVA DINOVA
ONE JUG OF WINE, TWO VESSELS
(SADDLE CREEK)

6

Folksy team-up that makes us pine for Conor Oberst's full return

Before he settled into life as the folksy liberal conscience of indie America, a kind of Iraq invasion Dylan, Conor Oberst used Bright Eyes to make music that was angry, liquor-drenched, paranoid and – if anyone dare say it anymore – emo. Neva Dinova, meanwhile, are part of the Omaha-based Saddle Creek clique. In 2004, with Bright Eyes on the cusp of hugeness, they hunkered down together for some boozy sessions that became this collaborative split rarity of an EP. In retrospect, it sits in his discography as the point where Oberst went, if not more sane, then more sonically sensible.

All this is significant now because the love-in between the pair has grown to such an extent that they've gone back, done four more tracks and given it a full-length release. Of the older stuff,

Oberst and Dinova frontdude Jake Bellows split the reins, taking on the country and the bluesy end of things, respectively. But, as is often the case, both acts land up watered down. Dinova's 'Someone's Love' is pretty, but doesn't match their usual eerie psych. Oberst's 'Spring Cleaning' is the kind of cracked acoustic sketch he specialises in, but it never comes to life here.

Happier news is the fact that Oberst is scratching this itch in the first place. He's hardly been a slouch since Bright Eyes went on hiatus, making two Mystic Valley Band albums and forming part of last year's Monsters Of Folk supergroup, but none of those endeavours mined quite the same magical, melodramatic fairy tales he attains under that name. Bellows takes the lead on the whimsical 'Someone's Love' and 'Rollerskating', which makes the other two the first

genuine Bright Eyes material since 2007. 'Happy Accident' is the more energetic customer, all crashing chords and snarled longing. But the real diamond here is the magisterially twisted 'I Know You', in which Oberst trades barbed contradictions with a would-be lover over a spooky waltz: "Walking with you through the courtyard where everything's marble and smooth/ You said the idea of perfection was just fundamentally cruel".

A new album is due by the year's end; the reassurance that Bright Eyes is back, bitter and beautiful as ever, is both thrilling and the only real reason for anyone other than the most feverish disciple to worry themselves with this curio. **Dan Martin**

DOWNLOAD: 1) 'I Know You' 2) 'Happy Accident' 3) 'Spring Cleaning'

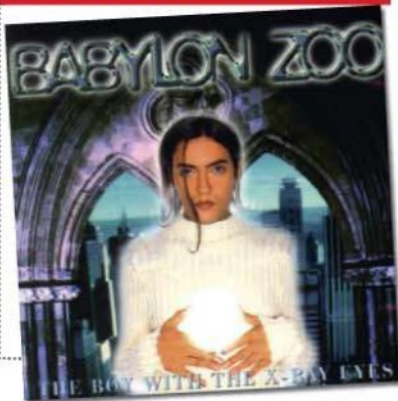
UNSPUN HEROES

DIGGING UP BURIED TREASURE FROM THE DEPTHS OF OUR COLLECTIONS

THIS WEEK...

Yes, you can sneer but this shiny glam-pop gem was a bona fide classic, says Gavin Haynes

BABYLON ZOO THE BOY WITH THE X-RAY EYES (EMI, 1996)



Nothing can put a bigger crimp in your career than having the fastest-selling debut single of all time. Just ask Jas Mann, author of 1996 smash 'Spaceman'. If you can find him. His last verified whereabouts was somewhere in the Mojave Desert. He has a never-updated blog. Last-broadcast musical act? The theme for Channel 4's *Speedway Grand Prix* season (2000/2001). How the grungy have fallen. These days, Mann's Babylon Zoo is best remembered as the punchline to some pop cultural meta-joke, a regular fixture on where-are-they-now TV clips show sneerathons.

Well, you know what? TV clips shows have lied to you. 'The Boy With The X-Ray Eyes' is too garish to be a 'masterpiece', true, but it still manages

to pack as much melody and pop joy into its span as any of the canonical albums of that year. The potentially-better-than-'Spaceman' opener 'Animal Army'. The stately lysergic explosion of the title track. The engorged grunge

It's best remembered as the punchline to some pop cultural where-are-they-now meta-joke

throb of 'I'm Cracking Up I Need A Pill'. It's big, bulbous, unapologetically OTT glam madness – as silly yet irresistible as anything Bolan ever did and, in hindsight, it seems to have single-handedly invented Mansun.

As it happened, the colossal weight of

expectation didn't just result in a good-not-great debut. It crushed him. Had its lead single not been attached to the same iconic Levi's campaign that took Stiltskin to Number One, the album might have drifted into the lower

reaches of the Top 40, then gradually risen as the public were worn down by the sheer hook-factor of its tunes. The music press would have constructed a narrative casting him as the heroic underdog. Mann's claims he was "an intergalactic Christ"

would've seemed more like the wacky ravings of a potential cult hero, rather than the foolish pride that comes before the fall they were by then willing him on to. Anyone who's heard the album recently might agree he deserved a better start. But then, few have.

LIVE!

UPFRONT AND BACKSTAGE

Edited by Emily Mackay

Spring

AND THE WHALE



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NOAH AND THE WHALE

ROUNDHOUSE, LONDON
FRIDAY, MARCH 12

Charlie Fink and co ditch the heartache for a rousing leap forward. Shame about the furniture

Move the lamp!" come the desperate screeches from the crowd mid-way through Noah And The Whale's triumphant Roundhouse gig. Not your typical heckle, but in context it makes perfect sense. Tonight the stage for the band's biggest ever London show is dotted with granny-tastic Victorian style light fixtures. To be frank, they don't do any favours for a band who've made a marked attempt to move away from the twee label that was once hung around their necks. "I didn't think anyone would want to see us," half-jokes a coy Charlie Fink when we grab a natter with him in a backstage corridor after the show. Surely, after bearing your heart and soul on your last album, simply showing your face would be a mere trifle matter in comparison, eh Charlie?

It's because of that stunning record – 'The First Days Of Spring' – that we're here tonight. Spurred by songwriter Fink's heartache, the band's second record was a glorious, rousing tribute to love lost, and of doing as best you can to get the hell over it. It's the sound of a band growing up quickly but with grace, and wisely remembering to burn their ukuleles in the bargain.

Opening with 'Love Of An Orchestra', like Belle & Sebastian after a supersized bag of Haribo Tangfastics, the tone of joyous, uplifting enchantment is set for the evening. Even their more maudlin moments like the aching 'Our Window' and 'My Broken Heart', during which Fink's rich baritone betrays long nights spent alone with Leonard Cohen, are infused with such passion and tenderness that

it's hard to be too saddened. Especially when you hear the triumphant flourishes of the brass section on the latter track.

The night feels cosy and intimate, despite the 3,000 capacity and vast circular ceiling, the band charming with Waterboys prog-folk wig-outs and stadium-rock shape-throwing. The show takes on a new weight, though, as the main lights dim and the no-longer-pesky lamp next to Fink glows amber, setting the stage for an acoustic set. Strumming through 'I Have Nothing' with a trio of backing singers murmuring angelically in the background, Fink's curls bob in front of his eyes and couples in the crowd cuddle, their actions saying everything you need to know about this epically moving songwriting. With pedal steel guitarist BJ Cole coming onto the stage for a rendition of 'My Door Is Always Open', the track is infused with a warm double shot of Americana which melds perfectly with Fink's ever-so-British stage manner. Bassist Urby Whale and fiddler Tom Hobden slink back to join in with the harmonies, indulging in some appropriate folk club-style finger-in-ear action. Superb ain't even the half of it.

As they slide into the title track from their debut album, 'Peaceful, The World Lays Me Down', as well as older song 'Mary', it's strikingly clear what a progression the band have made between their two records. Sure, they're nice enough numbers, with some gorgeous violin twiddles and melodic arcs, but they're nowhere near as affecting as their more recent efforts. So justly confident are the band in their newer material that, instead of reserving crowd-pleasing singles 'Shape Of My Heart' and 'Five Years Time' for the encore, they round off proceedings by debuting an entirely new track from the work in progress which is their third album.

If ever we've heard the sound of a man totally over his heartbreak, this is it. 'Tonight's The Kinda Night' is a bombastic rock'n'roll journey that could have been lifted straight from Bruce Springsteen's 'Born To Run' sessions. With its fervent, clattering guitars and clenched fist of a chorus, it conjures up cold six-packs of beer, evenings out with the boys and days in bed with girls called Wendy.

Tonight Noah And The Whale haven't just moved on, they haven't just moved lamps, they've moved hearts, minds and dancing feet too. Roll on more evolution for record number three. **Leonie Cooper**



The gentlemen of the lighting department

SHORT SETS

RETRIBUTION GOSPEL CHOIR CARGO, LONDON 15/03/10

Alan Sparhawk spent most of the '90s pissing against the flowering bed of grunge's commercial success with Low, and still smelt of roses. For the man who flourished under softened slow tempos and minimalist arrangements, side project Retribution Gospel Choir marks a radical departure. With a rampant Americana sound rattling against the rafters, Sparhawk's vocals are delivered in a harmoniously preaching manner on 'Hide It Away' and 'Working Hard'. However, it's the three-piece's lysergic interludes that really beguile the already enamoured crowd. **Thomas A Ward**

MONO SCALA, LONDON 15/03/10

Figureheads of the Japanese post-rock scene, Mono are just as mighty an influence on that genre in their own as Mogwai are in the UK. Masters of the quiet/PULVERISINGLY LOUD dynamic that induces near-cardiac arrest, the four-piece command a Godfather-esque respect tonight. Completely instrumental and free of vocal mics – they rely entirely on their formidable persona to impart their message. It proves an irresistible call for those who prefer their rock music intricate and uncompromising. **Tom Edwards**



HERE COMES THE SUN



YUCK/SUMMER CAMP

NOTTING HILL ARTS CLUB, LONDON
SATURDAY, MARCH 13

No offence to Yuck, but the line-up's all wrong. Summer Camp are on second billing, while the scruffy young London quintet lead. It's an afternoon of London lo-fi, but in two entirely different ways. Contrasting with Summer Camp's teenage swoon, Yuck sound grungy and late '90s, not unlike Pavement playing in the flat below. A kind of Dinosaur Jr Junior dinosaur egg, or something...

Even though they boast former members of Cajun Dance Party, they don't trade solely in nostalgia. Single 'Georgia' goes down a treat. Despite harking back to when plaid was hip, there's a freshness to their sound – if you can decipher it beneath the feedback and fuzz.

Anyway, back to Summer Camp. This is not quite their first gig – there was a properly secret show in Notting Hill a week ago, and an acoustic session not long after that – so we'll call this gig number two-and-a-half. Sometime NME scribe and angelic cooer Elizabeth Sankey and former electro-folk troubadour Jeremy Warmesley augment their duo with three back-ups on drums, keys and bass, and launch straight into 'Was It Worth It'. More jaunty than on record, it's an early '70s Eurovision groove that clocks in at under three minutes. Blending lo-fi with sugary sweet pop, the eponymous 'Summer Camp' is Lomography in sound, a retro-tinged, sweetly sepia snapshot of sun-soaked love. Though the songs are warm and fuzzy, they're not exactly thematically diverse. Boys/girls/summer/fun/sun seems to be the recurring thought progression, and new song 'It's Summer' follows the same pattern. Samples from '80s teen flicks add bite, as 'I Only Have Eyes For You' opens with Heather Chandler's infamous rant from Winona Ryder classic *Heathers* before slyly segueing into a doped-up lovesong.

For a band on their second (and a half) gig, it doesn't show. Sankey and Warmesley share vocals easily, while their drummer drops some "doo-wops". Finishing on forthcoming single 'Ghost Train', Sankey attempts a plug: "Actually, I'm not even going to bother." She's right not to. If they're this jaw-droppingly, miss-your-mouth-while-eating good after only 2.5 shows, there's no need to chase fans. They'll come of their own accord. **Ailbhe Malone**

Clouded vision



THE VIEW

CLUB NME @ KOKO, LONDON
FRIDAY, MARCH 12

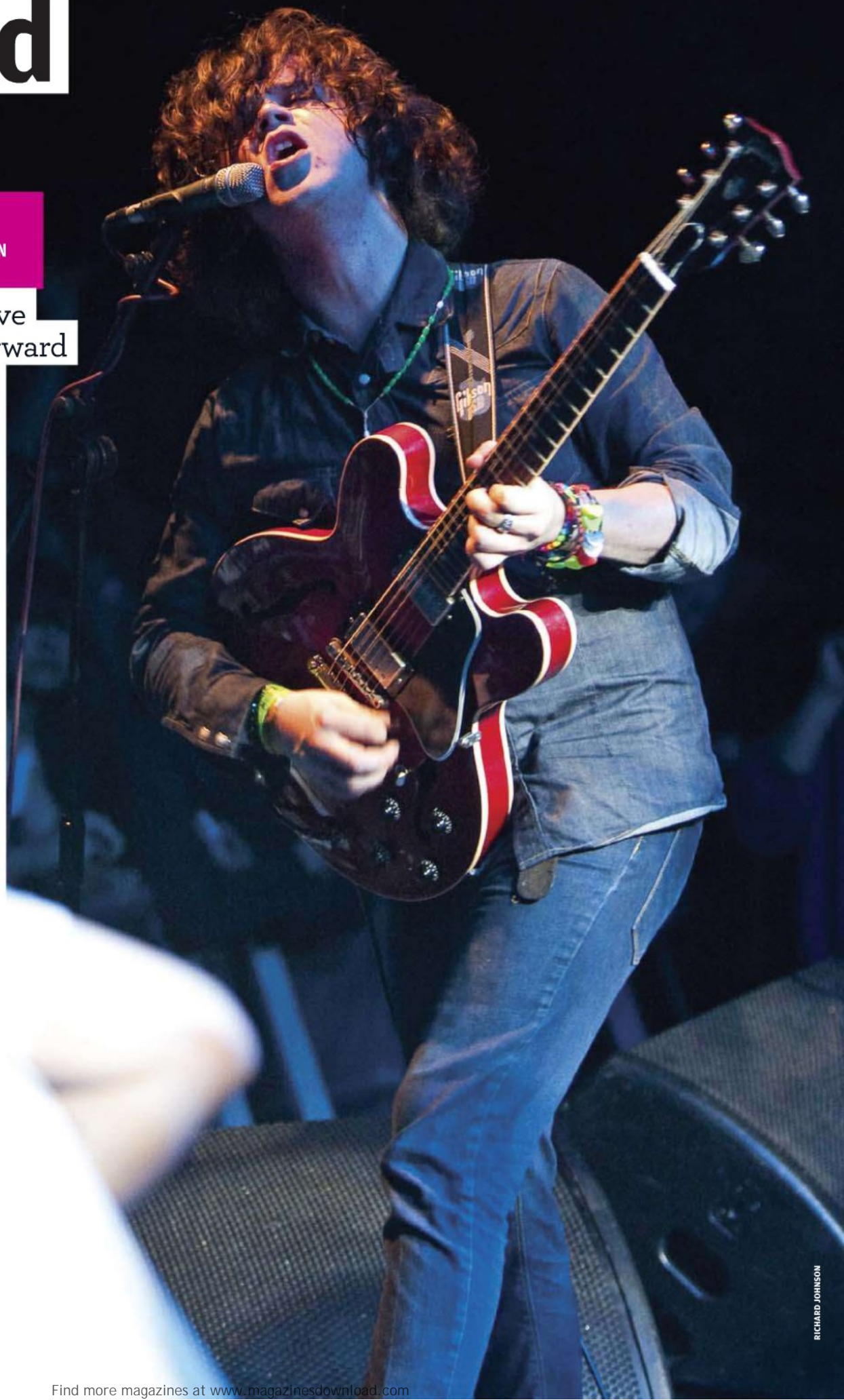
The scamps seem to have trouble seeing a way forward

Checklist: first album that sums up your general shouty, shambolic, Scottish shtick: check. Second 'darker', 'more experimental' album that takes the bits that people liked from the first but, like, pushes the boundaries with them, maaan: check. Third album that shows genuine progress and proves that the slightly forced maturity of the second effort was leading to something rather wonderful – er, well, if tonight is anything to go by, then not quite.

Piling up for their secret 1am headline slot at the Camden branch of Club NME, the Dryburgh four-piece are here to show what a year out of the limelight has resulted in. The answer, it seems, is not much. Kicking off with a double-whammy of riotous oldies – 'Glass Smash' and 'Wasted Little DJs' – there's a certain nostalgia to the familiar legion of sweaty polo shirts bouncing around the pit and Kyle Falconer's curly mop following suit on stage but, as the strains of "*Astedwae Ittlae Ejaysdae*" give way to the obvious bounce'n'thrash romp of newie 'Grace', it's fairly clear that time may pass but The View pretty much remain the same. Other cuts taken from their forthcoming third effort – 'Tragic Magic' and 'Happy' – are also notably unremarkable; they swagger and scream in all the right places and everyone jumps around regardless, but there comes a point when the trick starts to wear thin.

It's a shame, since 'Which Bitch?', though hardly keeping the likes of These New Puritans awake at night, was a relatively imaginative affair – melding their ballsy Scot-rock with an attempt to break out of their comfort zones. If there's one thing tonight shows, it's that a hell of a lot has changed since The View first rocked up with their scally tales of dirty jeans and lost weekends – it seems the four-piece are starting to become irrelevant.

Half a decade on, the post-Libertines resurgence of guitar bands has all but given way to everything from lo-fi surf-pop to rabble-rousing folk to synth-pounding electro, leaving the products of 2006 to either pave their way to the MOR major leagues or fall by the wayside. If The View don't want to end up in the latter category, they're gonna have to come out with something a damn sight fresher than what we've seen tonight. **Lisa Wright**



RICHARD JOHNSON



INTO MANUAL OVERDRIVE



THE AUTOMATIC
O2 ACADEMY 2, LIVERPOOL
SUNDAY, MARCH 14

Liverpool!" cries The Automatic's Rob Hawkins. "It's been fucking ages since we've been here!" To be precise, it's been almost a year and a half. The Automatic played two shows in this city at the end of 2008: one as part of MTV's Gonzo tour, and the other as a headline band. Barely anyone turned up to either, and both were apathetic and dreadful. But – what's this now? It's March 2010 and there's a sizeable, excitable crowd of faces here to see them. Word seems to have got out that The Automatic, rather than shuffling quietly off into two-album-band oblivion, have rediscovered their taste for this making-music lark, released an impressive third record on their own label and are turning in performances full of renewed passion.

Opening with recent single 'Interstate', The Automatic set the tone for what follows, flooding the room with rich, powerful guitars and lush three-part vocal harmonies. Never have they sounded this polished and alive with possibilities – former Yourcodenameis:milo man Paul Mullen now looks fully settled in and integral to the band's dynamic, pushing them forward with complex riffs, nutty showmanship and a much-needed injection of aggression. The opening to 'Can I Take You Home' is enormous, and it is Mullen who drives the furious outros to 'This Is A Fix', 'Monster' (while wearing a creepy old man mask) and 'Steve McQueen' (while wearing a horse head). But it's not just him. All of a sudden, The Automatic look and sound like a unit, playing for each other and playing their hearts out. The old hits still get the biggest reaction, and they still enjoy playing them, but this is a band with a new-found vigour and a unified vision. They look happy, and it's infectious, translating into a hugely impressive, enjoyable show that puts smiles on people's faces. And surely that's the whole point, right? **Mike Haydock**

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SHORT SETS

THE AVETT BROTHERS

RELENTLESS GARAGE,
LONDON, 16/03/10

No-one would actively wish Rick Rubin ill. Unless they'd just spent an hour being dragged through bluegrass-rock hell by his new prodigies. Not everyone can get it right all the time. The best you could say for The Avett Brothers is that they resemble the bug-eyed, shouty Isaac Brock of Modest Mouse. Mostly, this is anaemic, faux-authentic bumpiddle delivered with drippy, Disney-esque sincerity, desperately in search of some edge. "*Lies don't need an aeroplane to chase you down*", croons an Avett. If you see a big hairy chap with a beard, tell him we need a word, would you? **Gavin Haynes**

A GRAVE WITH NO NAME

HOXTON SQUARE BAR & KITCHEN, 15/03/10

There's something so modern about AGWNN's Alex Shields, even as he stands there in a Butthole Surfers T-shirt playing a spaced-out cover of The Lemonheads' 'The Outdoor Type'. For one, there's his thin feminine voice, and the samples that wrestle with the drums and guitars. Then there is his total disregard for pace (he plays what should be a two-minute song like an epic closer). Even when the reverb accidentally drops, it is us that feels embarrassed, like we have walked in on him naked. **Shambolic and interesting. Nat Davies**

Like most panda bears, this one's fallen asleep at the samplers



Tough love



PANDA BEAR
HEAVEN, LONDON
THURSDAY, MARCH 11

Noah Lennox shows balls with an unapologetic, unfluffy move to a new, more urgent sound

His stage name might be that of a fluffy, poorly evolved and undersexed creature, but Noah Lennox's balls really must be the size of a rhino's. Though their minds may be gallantly open tonight, Panda's fans are ultimately here to lose themselves in the ecstatic fug of his 'Merriweather Post Pavilion'-shaping album 'Person Pitch'. A terrific re-run of The Beach Boys for a post-rave generation, it was so kaleidoscopic it sent anyone with synaesthesia into a tailspin. But, true to the spirit of his awkward and counter-instinctive power animal, he won't be playing anything from that tonight. Well, aside from one song that no-one was much cared about anyway (the suitably titled 'I'm Not').

Gone are the days when kids would riot at gigs if bands had the temerity to try out a new barre chord, but still... To play a rare, massively anticipated date, fill it with new songs and moreover, to begin such a challenge with the brutally stark cold wave of 'Drone' (an icy two-note synth piece Lennox mostly yelps through), would give most performers the willies. At the very least they'd expect to lose sizeable chunks of their audience.

But this is a man whose solo debut, 'Young Prayer', was a devotional to his dead dad,

featuring little more than a pained yowling. Lennox's improvising ways with Animal Collective have prepared us well for his method. It's fine. However hard and bloody the beating, he always bears gifts, after all.

After 'Drone' comes the title track from upcoming album 'Tomboy'. Helmed by an EBM beat and grunge guitar, it's not pretty but, like the opener, it displays a new weapon: urgency. Everything tonight is tinted with this compelling aggression, from Aphex-like glitch to the jetplane intro of 'Benfica'. It's a refreshing antidote to his now much-copied woozy, washed-out sound.

But even if he's turning a huffy shoulder on the chillwave blog love-in of his stylistic descendents, Panda's knack for squeezing colour from melody means we don't have to wait long for his opening to grow into something sublime. 'Surfers' Hymn' twinkles with looped electronics and juju guitar, 'Last Night At The Jetty' sees him turn into a leftfield Julie Andrews, while 'Bullseye', with its psychedelic G-funk groove, could be the catchiest thing he's ever done. No fluffy-wuffy laurel-resting to be found here, then; this thrilling reacquaintance proves that Panda Bear takes to this evolving lark better than you might think. **Chris Parkin**

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MAY 2010

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SAT 15	WOLVERHAMPTON WULFRUN HALL	0870 320 7000
MON 17	LEEDS MET UNIVERSITY	0113 244 4600
SOLD OUT	LONDON ELECTRIC BALLROOM	
WED 19	LIVERPOOL SOUND CITY O ₂ ACADEMY	0844 477 2000
SOLD OUT	MANCHESTER RITZ	

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APRIL 2010

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FR	SOLD OUT	LASGOW BARROWLANDS
SAT 17		WHITEHAVEN CIVIC HALL 01946 514 960
MON 19		NEWCASTLE UNI 0191 263 5000
TU	SOLD OUT	MANCHESTER RITZ
WED 21		LEAMINGTON SPA ASSEMBLY 01926 523 001
THU 22		SOUTHAMPTON UNI 023 8063 2601
FR	SOLD OUT	LONDON HMV FORUM
SAT 24		NOTTINGHAM ROCK CITY 0871 310 0000
MON 26		LEEDS O ₂ ACADEMY 0844 477 2000
TUE 27		LIVERPOOL O ₂ ACADEMY 0844 477 2000
WED 28		WOLVERHAMPTON WULFRUN HALL 0870 320 7000
TH	SOLD OUT	BRIGHTON CONCORDE 2

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THE BEAT IS...TOUR

ALPHA BEAT

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ALBUM "THE BEAT IS..." OUT NOW WWW.RIBBONALPHABEAT.COM

APRIL

SUN 18	NORWICH WATERFRONT 0870 264 3333
MON 19	LEEDS STYLUS 0113 245 4650
TUE 20	NEWCASTLE NORTHUMBRIA UNI 0870 264 3333
THU 22	EDINBURGH PICTUREHOUSE 08444 999 990
FRI 23	GLASGOW O ₂ ABC 08444 999 990
SAT 24	MANCHESTER ACADEMY 2 0870 264 3333
SUN 25	OXFORD O ₂ ACADEMY 0844 477 2000
TUE 27	BRIGHTON CONCORDE 2 0870 264 3333
WED 28	LONDON KOKO 0870 264 3333
THU 29	BRISTOL ANSON ROOMS 08713 100 000

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FRI 09	BELFAST LIMELIGHT	0844 847 2455
SAT 10	DUBLIN ACADEMY	0818 719 300
MON 12	MANCHESTER SALFORD LOWRY	SOLD OUT
TUE 13	GLASGOW FRUITMARKET	08444 999 990
WED 14	EDINBURGH QUEENS HALL	08444 999 990
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SAT 17	CAMBRIDGE CORN EXCHANGE	SOLD OUT
MON 19	NEWCASTLE TYNE THEATRE	0844 4939 999
TUE 20	YORK OPERA HOUSE	0844 847 2322
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FRI 23	SOUTHAMPTON GUILDHALL	023 8063 2601
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APRIL		
MON 26	Norwich Arts Centre	01603 660 352
TUE 27	Nottingham Rescue Rooms	0871 310 0000
WED 28	Leeds Cockpit	0113 245 5570
THU 29	Glasgow Oran Mor	0844 499 9990
MAY		
SAT 01	Middlesbrough Empire (Club night)	01642 247 755
SUN 02	Manchester Academy 3	0161 832 1111
MON 03	Sheffield Leadmill	0870 010 4555
TUE 04	Birmingham O ₂ Academy2	0844 477 2000
THU 06	London Scala	020 7403 3331
FRI 07	Gloucester Guildhall	01452 503 050
SAT 08	Coventry Kasbah (Club night)	0871 2200 260
MON 10	Bristol Thekla	0870 444 4400
TUE 11	Exeter Cavern	01392 425 309
WED 12	Portsmouth Wedgewood Rooms	023 9286 3911
THU 13	Northampton Roadmenders	01604 604 020

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(16TH-24TH)

APRIL

FRI 16	YORK FIBBERS	08444 77 1000
SAT 17	CREWE THE BOX	0871 230 0010
SUN 18	MANCHESTER MOHO LIVE	0161 832 1111
TUE 20	CARDIFF CLWB IFOR BACH	029 2023 2199

WED 21	LONDON HMV FORUM	0870 150 0044
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THU 22	WOLVERHAMPTON THE SLADE ROOMS	0870 320 7000
FRI 23	NORTHAMPTON ROADMENDERS	0115 912 9000
SAT 24	CARLISLE BRICKYARD	08444 77 1000
MON 26	NEWCASTLE O ₂ ACADEMY	0844 477 2000
FRI 30	GLASGOW O ₂ ABC	08444 999 990

MAY		
SAT 01	DUNFERMLINE VELOCITY	08444 771 000

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Cardiff University Solus

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THU 16	NEWCASTLE NORTHUMBRIA UNI	0191 233 04444	FRI 24	OXFORD O ₂ ACADEMY	0844 477 2000
FRI 17	GLASGOW ORAN MOR	0844 499 9990	SAT 25	BRIGHTON DIGITAL	0871 2200 260
SAT 18	MANCHESTER ACADEMY 2	0161 832 1111	MON 27	STOKE UNDERGROUND	01782 206 000
MON 20	SHEFFIELD LEADMILL	0114 221 2828	TUE 28	CAMBRIDGE JUNCTION	01223 511 511
TUE 21	LEEDS METROPOLITAN UNI	0113 244 4600	WED 29	LIVERPOOL O ₂ ACADEMY2	0844 477 2000

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03 SHEFFIELD O₂ Academy2
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08 MANCHESTER Roadhouse
09 HULL The Adelphi
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ALPHA BEAT

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18 BRISTOL O₂ ACADEMY
19 FALMOUTH PRINCESS PAVILION
21 GLASGOW O₂ ABC
22 NEWCASTLE O₂ ACADEMY
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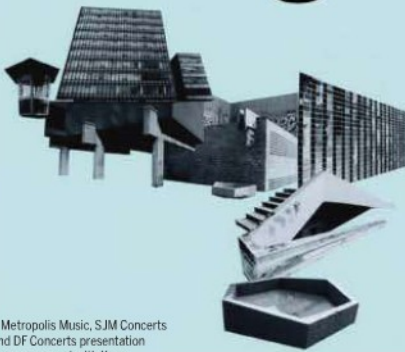
Tuesday 6th July
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21 **NORWICH WATERFRONT**
01603 508 050
23 **BIRMINGHAM * IRISH CENTRE**
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24 **LEEDS MET UNIVERSITY ***
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25 **NEWCASTLE * O₂ ACADEMY**
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27 **GLASGOW O₂ ABC**
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28 **MANCHESTER ACADEMY 2 ***
0161 832 1111
30 **BRISTOL O₂ ACADEMY ***
0844 477 2000

MAY
01 **SOLD OUT! CONCORDE 2 ***
02 **OXFORD O₂ ACADEMY ***
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04 **SOLD OUT! LONDON ELECTRIC BALLROOM ***
05 **NORTHAMPTON * ROADMENDERS**
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18 **LIVERPOOL GUILD OF STUDENTS**
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20 **GLASGOW STRATHCLYDE STUDENTS' UNION**
21 **NOTTINGHAM GATECRASHER**
22 **LEEDS UNIVERSITY UNION**
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WED 02 **NEWCASTLE THE CLUNY** 0191 230 4474
THU 03 **DUNDEE DOGHOUSE** 08444 771 000
FRI 04 **GLASGOW NICE & SLEAZY** 0844 847 2487
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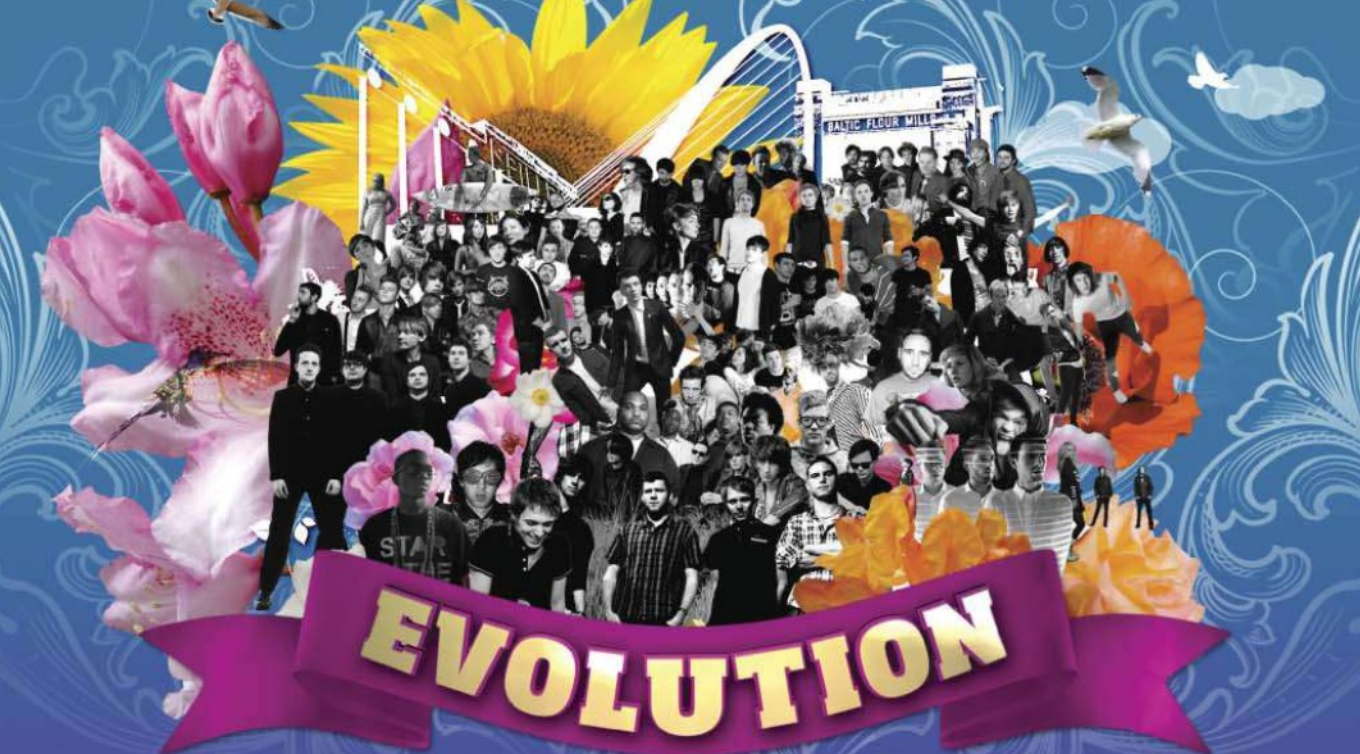
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FRI 07 **CARDIFF BUFFALO BAR**
SAT 08 **BATH MOLES**
SUN 09 **LEEDS THE WELL**
MON 10 **STOKE SUGARMILL**
TUE 11 **LIVERPOOL MASQUE**
WED 12 **CAMBRIDGE PORTLAND ARMS**
THU 13 **SUNDERLAND INDEPENDENT**
FRI 14 **DUNDEE FAT SAM'S**
SAT 15 **ARBROATH DEVOTOS**
SUN 16 **DUNFERMLINE PJ MOLLOYS**
MON 17 **BATHGATE HARLEYS**
WED 19 **CHELMSFORD BARHOUSE**
THU 20 **SHEFFIELD PLUG**
FRI 21 **LEICESTER MUSIC CAFE**
SAT 22 **BLACKBURN LIVE LOUNGE**
SUN 23 **WAKEFIELD THE VENUE**
MON 24 **BIRMINGHAM THE FLAPPER**
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NEWCASTLEGATESHEAD QUAYSIDE

SUNDAY 30 MAY | MONDAY 31 MAY

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Advertorial Feature

Studio Spaces

Not everyone can record their debut album in a shed like hermit Bon Iver. Nor is it easy to get enough money to record your tracks. Let's face it, it's hard enough scrapping a few pennies together for fun times like records and going to gigs. But a lack of big budget shouldn't be a barrier to you and your band getting off the ground with a flying start. There are plenty of studio spaces out there that can cater for all your band's needs at an affordable rate that won't break the bank.

Take for example **Mill Hill Music Complex** that's played host to Amy Winehouse and Kate Nash. As a partner in Sound Skool, a project encouraging young people not in education or training back into learning, Mill Hill Music Complex provides various free music courses that can help you along the way.

Or for the more adventurous band there's **Eve Studios**, a retro themed space based in Stockport. With the studio a smorgasbord of electronic and acoustic instruments Eve Studios is the place for bands who like to experiment.

As home to recorded albums such as The Verve's 'Urban Hymns', The Stone Roses' 'Second Coming' and The Libertines' eponymous album **Metropolis Group** is the place for bands aiming high.

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And believe us, it's totally worth checking out **The Recording Studio, Verden Studios, Zed-One Studios, Peak Studios and Tweeters** for a recording environment that works for you. With such appealing rates for musicians at any level in their career here are some opportunities you really can't afford to miss.

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I WANT TO SOUND LIKE... LIGHTSPEED CHAMPION



Miki Pettit, 18, Ewell: "There's so many cool sounds on the new Lightspeed Champion album, where do you start?"

THE SOUND

Mr Champion, aka Devonté Hynes, is a restless soul and it's no surprise that he's returned with a completely new approach on his new album 'Life Is Sweet! Nice To Meet You'. Overall he was aiming for a big, echoey '60s kind of sound, but the whole record is so teeming with great ideas it's hard to tag stylistically. Most obviously there's a whole lot more piano playing; Dev's skill at the keys is a revelation, and it dovetails nicely with his artfully picked out guitar lines.

THE GEAR

Main guitars are a Fender Telecaster and a bulky hollowbody Gretsch (he thinks the model is a 6120) which provides chunky rhythm work and the occasional stomping lead. Both tend to go through a Fender DeVille amp. His Wurliitzer piano and Roland Juno keyboard have now really come to the fore.

IN THE STUDIO

Before he steps through the door of a studio, Dev always has every song written with arrangements for all the instruments in place. As a result, this album was recorded in just nine days at Mission Sound Studios in New York. He played all the lead guitar and piano himself, often recording the vocals at the same time as he played the piano parts.

THE TECHNIQUE

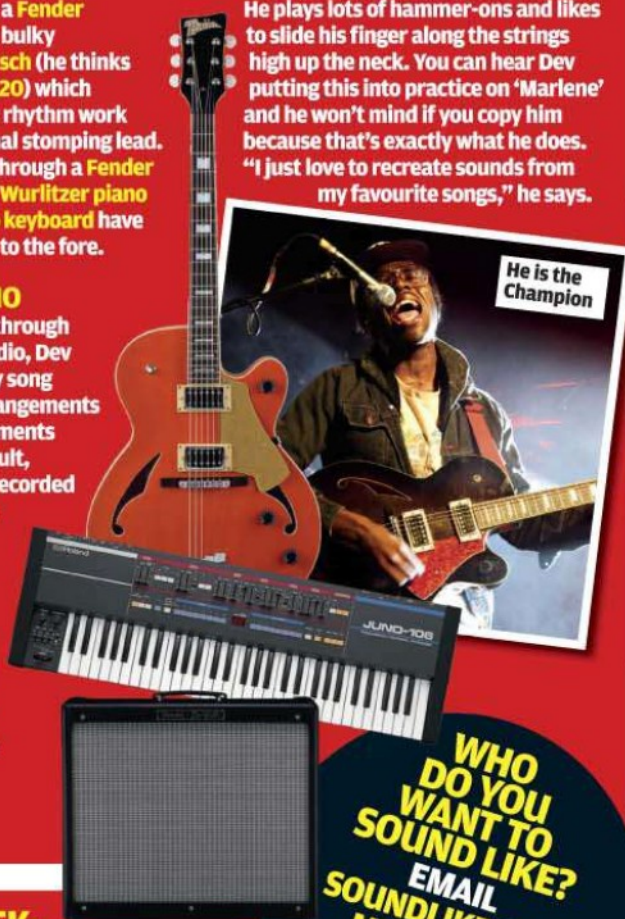
"I don't play any chords on the guitar, I just play single-note melody lines around the piano chords," reveals Dev.

ON THE STAGE

The core of his live band is a four-piece, but often the line-up will expand to enable Dev to concentrate on his singing. His favourite guitar for gigs is the relatively inexpensive Italia Torino pictured. The live amp is the DeVille, while his Juno keyboard and Rhodes electric piano generally go along too.

BEST TRICK

He plays lots of hammer-ons and likes to slide his finger along the strings high up the neck. You can hear Dev putting this into practice on 'Marlene' and he won't mind if you copy him because that's exactly what he does. "I just love to recreate sounds from my favourite songs," he says.



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Words by Steve Bailey from...



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Kassidy Barfly 0870 907 0999

MelonHeadMan 100 Club

020 7636 0933

Mexico Indigo Rhythm Factory

020 7247 9386

Nedry/Youth In/ Colour/Toodar

The Rest Is Noise 020 7346 8521

Nixa/Never Means Maybe/Tell

It To The Marines The Lexington

020 7837 5387

Noel Gallagher Royal Albert Hall

020 7589 8212

Performance Hoxton Square Bar

& Kitchen 020 7613 0709

Pneu/Shield Your Eyes/Illness

Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478

Popular Workshop/William/

No Cars/Local Girls Buffalo Bar

020 7359 6191

Reverend Horton Heat Electric

Ballroom 020 7485 9006

Sleigh Bells/Widower Arts Club

020 7460 4459

Stanley Brinks/Benni Hemm

Hemm/Triples Rosie Windmill

020 8671 0700

This Is Hell Underworld

020 7482 1932

Tiffany Page Garage (Upstairs)

0871 230 1094

The Tiny Gods/The Arousers/

The Snap Elect/Monkey Island

Undersolo 020 7482 4611

Tuning Garage 020 7607 1818

Untitled/Stanley Odd/Ludwig

Amadeus/Free Peace Hope

& Anchor 020 7354 1312

Words Backwards 229 Club

020 7631 8310

MANCHESTER

The Arusha Accord Satan's Hollow

0161 236 0666

Diana Vickers Deaf Institute

0161 330 4019

Exit Calm Moho Live 0161 834 8180

Falling Red Grand Central

0871 230 1094

SUNDAY

MARCH 28

Tune in to *New Noise* with Jon Hillcock as he runs through tracks from the latest new bands on NME Radio from 6pm

NME

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Ben Howard Moles 01225 404445

BELFAST

David Lyttle Group Black Box
00 35391 566511
General Fiasco Queen's University
028 9024 5133

BIRMINGHAM

Goodnight Lenin/Katy Lied/Grace
The Magic Roots Hare And Hounds
0121 444 2081

Motion City Soundtrack

O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 **WA**
Timothy B Schmit Glee Club
0870 241 5093

BRIGHTON

Chris Brokaw/Geoff Farina
Freebutt 01273 603974
Nachtmystium Engine Room
01273 728 999
Tunng Concorde 2 01273 673311

BRISTOL

The Automatic Thekla 08713 100000
Walter Schreifels O2 Academy 2
0870 771 2000 **WA**

CARDIFF

Boy With X-ray Eyes Barfly
029 2066 7658 **+14**

DUBLIN

The Unthanks Whelan's
00 3531 475 9372
You Me At Six Olympia
00 3531 679 3323

EDINBURGH

Haddow Fest: Idlewild/The
Dykenies/We Were Promised
Jetpacks/Nine Black Alps/The
10:04s/My Latest Novel/The
Paddingtons/Sergeant/

The Chapman Family/The Xcarts/
London Blackmarket/The OK Social
Club/Pose Victorious/The Nature
Boys/Imperial Racing Club
Various venues 0871 230 1094
Hey Studio 24 0131 558 3758

GLASGOW

Emery King Tut's Wah Wah Hut
0141 221 5279
La La Vazquez/Golden Grrris
13th Note Café 0141 553 1638
Street Dogs Stereo 0141 576 5018
Winger Cathouse 0141 248 6606

GUILDFORD

Kill It Kid Boileroom 01483 440022

LEEDS

British Wildlife Festival: Two
Minute Noodles/Divorce/The
Notorious Hi-Fi Killers/Ultimate
Thrush/Serious Sam Barrett/Run,
Walk!/Hank Haint/The Acutes
Various venues 0871 230 1094

The Jim Jones Revue New Roscoe
0113 246 0778

Peggy Sue Brudenell Social Club
0113 243 5866

Tom Hingley Northern Monkey
0113 242 6630

LONDON

Deadly Circus Fire/New Sun Blues/
Saving J Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773
Ignominious Incarceration
Underworld 020 7482 1932
JLS Royal Albert Hall 020 7589 8212
Kamelot KOKO 020 7388 3222
Peter Gabriel The O2 Arena
0870 701 4444
Symphony Of Pain/Vitreolic Bull
& Gate 020 7485 5358

MANCHESTER

Archie Bronson Outfit Academy 3
0161 832 1111
Chris Rea Apollo 0870 401 8000
The Lambrettas Moho Live
0161 834 8180

The Nile Band Iguana Bar
0161 881 9338

Stand Out Riot Retro Bar
0161 274 4892

NEWCASTLE

Her Name Is Calla Cluny
0191 230 4474

John Whitehill Band The Tyne
0191 265 2550

NORWICH

Madina Lake Waterfront
01603 632717

Noah Fentz Boundary 01603 407079

NOTTINGHAM

Zebrahead Rock City 08713 100000

OXFORD

Dan Le Sac Vs Scroobius Pip
O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 **WA**

Paloma Faith O2 Academy
0870 771 2000 **WA**

SHEFFIELD

Ian Siegal Boardwalk 0114 279 9090
Robots In Disguise O2 Academy 2
0870 771 2000 **WA**

SOUTHAMPTON

Mumma Moto Hamptons Bar
07919 253 508

Plugfoot Joiners 023 8022 5612

WAKEFIELD

Seven Year Kismet Snooty Fox
01924 374455

YORK

Pantheon Fibbers 01904 651 250 **+14**

MONDAY

MARCH 29



The Specials, Royal Albert Hall, London

The Automatic, Thekla, Bristol



BATH

Goldheart Assembly Moles
01225 404445

BIRMINGHAM

Emery O2 Academy 3
0870 771 2000 **WA**
Madina Lake O2 Academy 2
0870 771 2000 **WA**

BRIGHTON

Dan Le Sac Vs Scroobius Pip
Concorde 2 01273 673311

CARDIFF

OK/The Locanos/Cat Mouse Cat
Buffalo Bar 02920 310312
Walter Schreifels Barfly
029 2066 7658 **+14**

EDINBURGH

Amy Macdonald Picture House
0844 847 1740

EXETER

Ingested Cavern Club 01392 495370

GLASGOW

Battle Of Wolf 359 13th Note Café
0141 553 1638
Common Grave Ivory Blacks
0141 221 7871
Corinne Bailey Rae Oran Mor
0141 552 9224

Dirty Sweets King Tut's Wah Wah Hut
0141 221 5279

Robots In Disguise O2 ABC2
0141 204 5151 **WA**

Zebrahead Cathouse 0141 248 6606

GUILDFORD

The Lawrence Arms Boileroom
01483 440022

LEEDS

Her Name Is Calla/
Worriedaboutsatan/Anna
Rose Carter Holy Trinity Church
01132 454268

LIVERPOOL

Ellie Goulding O2 Academy
0870 771 2000 **WA**

LONDON

Autorotation/We Yes You No/
Sly Paws/Audiopeel 93 Feet East
020 7247 6095

Black Star Liner/Bernadette
Bentley/Bad Wolf Hope & Anchor
020 7354 1312

Chris T-T Slaughtered Lamb
020 8682 4080

Diana Vickers Borderline
020 7734 5547

Feldspar 12 Bar Club 020 7240 2622

Goldhawks The Lexington
020 7837 5387

Ice Black Birds/Babeshadow/
Beaty Heart The Old Queen's Head
0207 839 7261

Jiving Miss Daisy 100 Club
020 7636 0933

The Kleins/The Working Girls/
Liz And The Ligers Dublin Castle
020 7485 1773

Levi Roots Jazz Café 020 7916 6060

Ninja Gun Underworld 020 7482 1932

Paloma Faith O2 Shepherds Bush
Empire 0870 771 2000 **WA**

Peggy Sue Garage 020 7607 1818

Phoenix Roundhouse 020 7482 7318

The Specials Royal Albert Hall
020 7589 8212

The Steepwater Band Bush Hall
020 8222 6955

Therapy? Monto Water Rats
020 7837 4412

Young Rebel Set Barfly
0870 907 0999 **+14**

MANCHESTER

The Besnard Lakes Dulcimer
0161 860 0044

The Members Moho Live
0161 834 8180

Ndambi Band On The Wall
01604 604225

Street Dogs Star & Garter
0161 273 6726

NEWCASTLE

Mamas Gun O2 Academy 2
0870 771 2000

NORTHAMPTON

The Joy Formidable
Roadmender Centre
01604 604222

NOTTINGHAM

The Broadcast Rock City
08713 100000

PORTSMOUTH

The Automatic Wedgewood Rooms
023 9286 3911

SOUTHAMPTON

The Computers Joiners
023 8022 5612

TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Lycans Blood The Forum
08712 777101

TUESDAY

MARCH 30

BELFAST

Canterbury Queen's University
028 9024 5133
Tubelord Auntie Annie's
028 9050 1660

BIRMINGHAM

Editors O2 Academy
0870 771 2000 **WA**

BRIGHTON

The Computers Engine Room
01273 728 999
The Heartbreaks The Hope
01273 723 568

BRISTOL

Archie Bronson Outfit Thekla
08713 100000
Last Casanovas/Archimedes/Roxys
Wardrobe/In Your Honour/The
Bird The Magicians/Social Flat Line
Croft 0117 987 4144

CARDIFF

Brooke Barfly 029 2066 7658 **+14**
Emery Clwb Ifor Bach 029 2023 2199

DUBLIN

The Courteeners Academy
00 3531 877 9999
Islands Academy 2
00 3531 877 9999

EDINBURGH

Race Horses Sneaky Pete's
0131 225 1757

GLASGOW

Adelaide's Cape 13th Note Café
0141 553 1638
The Lawrence Arms Cathouse
0141 248 6606

The Molotovs King Tut's Wah Wah
Hut 0141 221 5279
Motion City Soundtrack Oran Mor
0141 552 9224

GUILDFORD

Kids Can't Fly Boilerroom
01483 440022

LEAMINGTON SPA

Corinne Bailey Rae The Assembly
01926 313774

LEEDS

Zebrahead Cockpit 0113 244 3446

LEICESTER

Her Name Is Calla/
Worriedaboutsatan Firebug
0116 255 1228

LIVERPOOL

Robots In Disguise O2 Academy 2
0870 771 2000 **WA**

LONDON

Abdullah Ibrahim Barbican Hall
020 7638 8891
The Automatic Garage
020 7607 1818
The Branco Heist/Leddra
Chapman/Georgia Strand/
Greenback The Lexington
020 7837 5387



Brand Nubian Jazz Café
020 7916 6060

Chris T-T Slaughtered Lamb
020 8682 4080

Clip Stamp Fold/Black Daniel/
Calling Cairo/Hoshal Patrick
93 Feet East 020 7247 6095

Columbus Giant/Steve Carlson
Underbelly 0207 613 3105

Dark Room Notes/No And The
Maybes Buffalo Bar 020 7359 6191

Emanuel And The Fear Barfly
0870 907 0999 **+14**

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John McKeown Enterprise
020 7485 2659

The Master Colony Hope & Anchor
020 7354 1312

May 68/Portasound White Heat @
Madame Jo Jo's 020 7734 2473

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Gang Borderline 020 7734 5547

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The Who Royal Albert Hall
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Younger Brother Cargo
0207 749 7840

MANCHESTER

Andy McKee Band On The Wall
0161 832 6625

Ellie Goulding Academy 2
0161 832 1111

Flyleaf Academy 3 0161 832 1111

NEWCASTLE
Winger O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000

NORWICH

John Smith Arts Centre
01603 660352

NOTTINGHAM

A Major Motion Picture Maze
0115 947 5650

SHEFFIELD

The Joy Formidable O2 Academy 2
0870 771 2000 **WA**

SOUTHAMPTON

Light Effect Joiners 023 8022 5612

ST ALBANS

Candy Runts Horn 01727 853143

WORCESTER

Duck Baker Moonshine Room
0871 230 1094

YORK

The Broadcast Fibbers
01904 651 250 **+14**



Ellie Goulding,
Academy 2,
Manchester

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GIGS



DANIEL JOHNSTON

STARTS: LONDON TROXY, APRIL 2

The troubled cult hero heads to the UK for a rare date that's not to be missed.

NME.COM/artists/daniel-johnston



STORNOWAY

STARTS: MULL AN TOBAR, APRIL 6

The recent 4AD signings head out ahead of the release of their new album 'Beachcomber's Windowsill'.

NME.COM/artists/stornoway



CHAPEL CLUB

STARTS: PORTSMOUTH CELLARS, APRIL 7

Following on from their Shockwaves NME Awards Shows the London outfit embark on their own headline tour.

NME.COM/artists/chapel-club



SUMMER CAMP

STARTS: LONDON THE LEXINGTON, APRIL 8

Folk troubadour Jeremy Warmsley and music hack Elizabeth Sankey team up for this dreaming project.

NME.COM/artists/summer-camp



MARK LANEGAN

STARTS: O2 ACADEMY BRISTOL, APRIL 23

The Screaming Trees stalwart puts collaborations with Soulsavers and Isobel Campbell on hold to go solo.

NME.COM/artists/mark-lanegan



SURFER BLOOD

STARTS: NOTTINGHAM RESCUE ROOMS, MAY 3

The Floridian indie punk-rockers head over to tour their awesome debut LP 'Astro Coast'.

NME.COM/artists/surfer-blood



DEERHUNTER

STARTS: MANCHESTER CLUB ACADEMY, MAY 5

Bradford Cox puts his solo project Atlas Sound on hold and regroups with his band ahead of their ATP show.

NME.COM/artists/deerhunter



THE NATIONAL

STARTS: LONDON ELECTRIC BALLROOM, MAY 5

American indie-rockers The National tour in support of their forthcoming album 'High Violet'.

NME.COM/artists/the-national



THE NEW PORNOGRAPHERS

STARTS: LONDON ELECTRIC BALLROOM, MAY 19

Indie-rock power-pop doesn't get more awesome than this. The Canadian outfit tour fifth album 'Together'.

NME.COM/artists/the-new-pornographers

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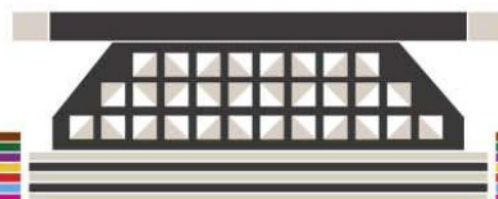
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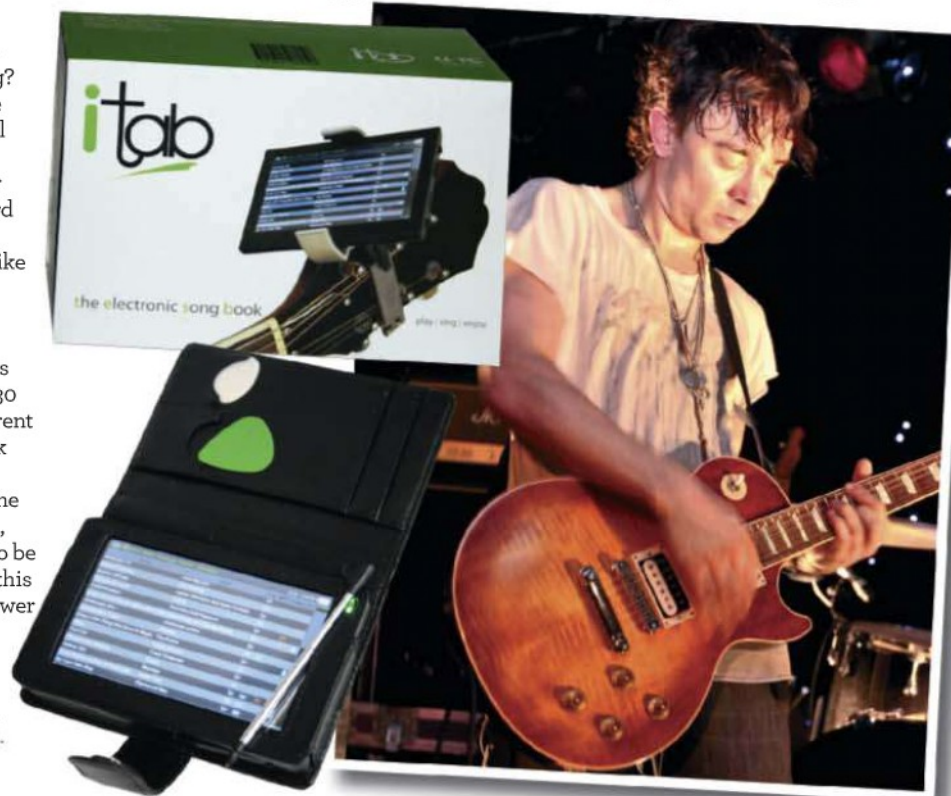
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Win an i-tab guitar gadget

Still not quite the guitar hero you'd planned on being? Worry not, as the portable i-tab will change all that. This genius gizmo sits on the end of your axe, scrolling lyrics and chord tabs, meaning you can play along to your favourite hits like a pro (for more info see www.i-tab.com). One lucky reader can win an i-tab with specially programmed tracks chosen by NME. It includes 30 songs by everyone from current big indie hitters The Big Pink (pictured), Jamie T and Florence & The Machine to the legendary likes of The Clash, Joy Division and Nirvana. To be in with a chance of winning this exclusive i-tab, correctly answer the question below.

What is the word 'tab' short for?

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THE NME CROSSWORD

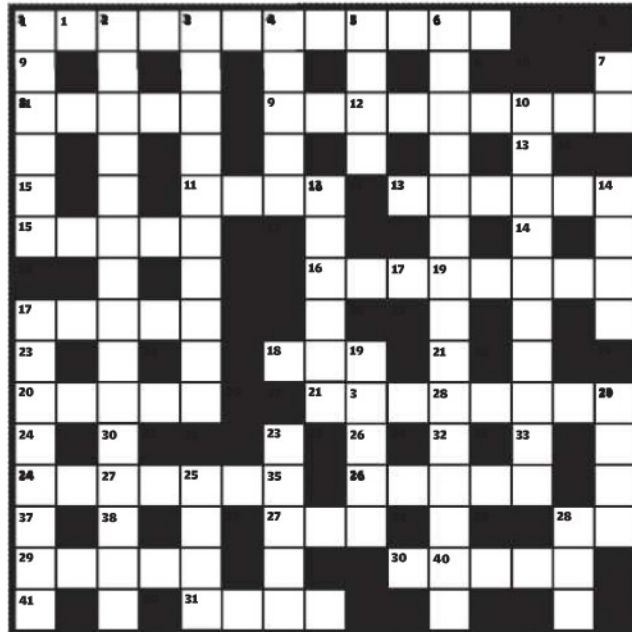
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CLUES ACROSS

- 1 One step to follow for gunman with Blood Red Shoes (4-4-4)
- 8 Unbelievably their latest album is of the 'Sisterworld' (5)
- 9 Sudden expression of emotion as Turin Brakes released album (9)
- 11+30A She's been crowned a beauty with Hole (4-5)
- 13+17A Uncharted debut single from The Smiths, although cover version from Sandie Shaw with Smiths members was a hit (4-2-5)
- 15 _____ Sinatra who, along with her father Frank, sang 'Somethin' Stupid' (5)
- 16+26A Scouts round for warming company and some Animal Collective music (8-5)
- 17 (See 16 across)
- 18 Dad, it's a U2 album (3)
- 20+7D "What if God was _____/ Just a slob like _____", Joan Osborne (3-2-2)
- 21 Plenty of natural night light for recording of live album by Irish singer/songwriter Paul Brady (4-4)
- 24 Johnny _____, US singer who had '70s hit with 'Hang On In There Baby' (7)
- 26 (See 16 across)
- 27 Someone's included a Yeasayer single (1-1-1)
- 28 John's included a Ciara/Ludacris single (2)
- 29 Albums 'Never Loved _____' by The Wonder Stuff or 'A Date With _____' by The Cramps (5)
- 30 (See 11 across)
- 31 "The water is warm, but it's sending me shivers/A baby is born, crying out for attention", 2008 (4)

CLUES DOWN

- 1 The Courteeners' music performed part falsetto and part contralto (6)
- 2 "Knowing that you lied straight-faced while I cried/Still I look to find a _____", Tim Hardin (6-2-7)
- 3 I can't find where I'm at with The Longpigs (4-6)
- 4 They turned themselves 'Inside In/Inside Out' (5)
- 5 Album from jazz legend Miles Davis is something for a ballerina to get into (4)
- 6 Lousy pop tune, Ali. Rewrite it for Nina Simone (1-3-1-5-2-3)
- 7 (See 20 across)
- 10 Rock legend who was born Simon John Ritchie in 1957 (3-7)
- 12+17D Fed up with farewells, especially as this was from the late Mark Linkous of Sparklehorse (4-2-8)
- 14 Having the label of 'big brother' with Oasis (4)
- 17 (See 12 down)
- 19 Rhythm of the beat on Pink Floyd album (5)
- 22 Hollies singer Graham _____, who later met up with David Crosby, Stephen Stills and Neil Young (4)
- 23 (See 28 down)
- 25 A bit long in the tooth for a Fleetwood Mac album (4)
- 28+23D It's unusual to get such flow from the heart of Yeasayer (3-5)



FEBRUARY 27 ANSWERS

ACROSS

1+24D The Courage Of Others, 8 Karen, 9+10A+29D Dirty Old Town, 12 Usher, 13 Rewind, 16 On, 17 Iz-U, 18+30A Little Comets, 21 USSR, 23 Gods And Monsters, 27 Hearts, 28 PYT, 32+5D Broken Arrow, 35 Len, 36 Rescue

DOWN

2 Horehound, 4+3D Under Control, 6 Ely, 7 Food, 8 Keuning, 14+34A Ice On Fire, 15 Doubt, 19+22D I'm Not Sorry, 20+11D Tom's Diner, 25 Sparkle, 26 Sice, 28 Psalm, 30 Café, 31 More, 33 NYC



COMPILED BY
Trevor Hungerford

PETER ROBINSON Vs

ALISON GOLDFRAPP

The golden siren puts her back out to talk about *that* viral video and not meeting ET

Hello, Alison. We were due to meet yesterday but you did your back in during a photoshoot.

"I was in a lot of pain. It's an old injury. If I'm doing a lot of travelling it aggravates it, and just sitting down on your arse for photos doesn't help."

One quite odd aspect of Goldfrapp, I find, is that everyone knows you but you don't actually sell many records.

"(Sound of pouting) That's right. We don't sell shitloads of records and we're not the new kid on the block and one has to be one or the other, it seems."

How certain are you that your music is actually good?

"I don't like everything we've done, I have to say. I mean there are songs on previous albums where I think 'I'm not sure about that one.' But in my teens I was obsessed with Prince but didn't like everything he did. So... Yeah."

What would you rather be doing now than this?

"Anything (explodes with laughter). No that's not true. I'd rather be sitting in the sunshine having a glass of wine."

It was rumoured that you were behind the mystery iamamiwhoami viral videos recently - is that something else you've been doing?

"We actually got sent that video by someone on the Goldfrapp messageboard. There were rumours about it being us, but it's definitely not. I think a lot of people are liking the music, but it ain't us."

OK. Product endorsement deals are all the rage. Do people want these type of things from Goldfrapp?

"Not often. I've been asked to endorse a couple of things... a make-up brand who turned out not to have any money to give me. I don't think we're famous enough! We're not a big enough name."

So if someone came to you and said, 'We'd like to put our new make of car in your new video'...

"Actually, do you know what? I'm lying because we just recently put a beer in our video for 'Rocket' because it paid for



"I DON'T LIKE EVERYTHING WE'VE DONE, I HAVE TO SAY"

half the video, so we said yes. And it kind of fitted. So that was good."

Have you ever had to write a CV?

"Yes and I used to lie. A lot."

What are your educational qualifications?

"I have an O-level in art and O-level drama. That's it! Oh, and a fine art degree too."

So your art degree's fine but you only got two O-levels? That takes some effort.

"I did absolutely nothing at school. I hated it and I didn't do anything. But I did go to university. I didn't do A-levels. I left home at 16 and went to London, then started singing with a Belgian dance company when I was 19. I did a lot of bumming around."

Do you have any other qualifications? Like a health and safety certificate, for example?

"I've got a gold medal in swimming."

What will NME readers like about your new album?

"Oh, fucking hell..."

Do you think they will like it?

"No, they might not, no... (Decisively) They might not like it. It's hard to say what they might like about it: they might like the fact that it's up and fun and joyous, but they might not like that. But apart from that they'll probably hate it."

What music do you hate?

"(Gaily) Oh, most of it..."

Do you think you look better or worse than you do in photos?

"Sometimes better, sometimes worse."

When you look at photographs of you, do you look like you?

"They take me by surprise sometimes. Sometimes in a good way, sometimes in a bad way."

Do you ever pause to consider the existence of extra-terrestrial life?

"No."

Because you're certain it exists or certain it doesn't?

"Well I don't... really... care that much. There's quite a lot to be going on with down here."

So if someone appeared from outer space and said, 'Hello! I am making 'first contact',' you would say, 'I'm terribly sorry, I'm in the middle of a phone interview then after that there's a gas bill to be taken care of'?

"Well no, I think if someone from another universe came to say hello to me I'd be very pleased to see them and very intrigued."

Having said that, at the same time, you're a busy person. You've got five minutes for them, but if it's going to take much longer they're better off trying someone else?

"Well, you know how it is."

IDEAS FOR GOLDFRAPP TRIBUTE ACTS

OLDCHAPP

Popular hits such as 'Ooh La La' and 'Number One' brought to life in the music hall style. Secretly Chas from Chas & Dave wearing a wig.

COLD SNAP

Popular hits such as 'Rocket' and 'Train' brought to life, but only during the months of October to February (weather permitting).

VOLETRAPP

Popular hits such as 'Fly Me Away' and 'Happiness' performed by a small, captured rodent.

GOLDFRAPPY

Popular hits such as 'Strict Machine' and 'Caravan Girl' brought to life in the style of chart-topping trio N-Dubz.

FOLDED MAPP

Popular hits such as 'Ride A White Horse' and 'Black Cherry' brought to life by employees of Ordnance Survey.

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